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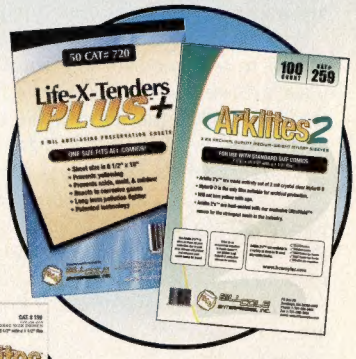

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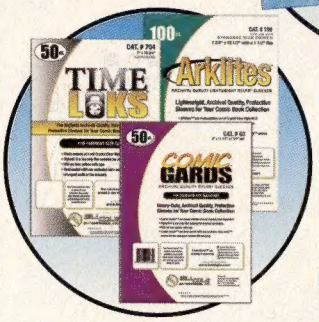

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EDITORIAL

Before reading the rest of this column, check out my Free Comic Book Day report on Page 108. Now, taking into account the current economy and the shaky situations in which some retailers, especially solo owner-operators, can find themselves, here are some low-cost/no-cost suggestions:

• If you're going to change your store hours to accomodate a second job, update your answering-machine message. It only takes a few moments and it's like having another employee on hand to take care of customers when you're not available.

• Does your store have a website? If you're a retailer and you don't have one, get one. Don't know how to set one up or maintain it? Look to your customer base for help. There should be a few customers who are Internet-savvy and would be willing to trade their time for a special discount or other consideration.

• Spread the word! When Free Comic Book Day is coming, send a press release to local media, hand out flyers at area events, put up signs at the store, encourage customers to tell their friends, *etc.* See if you can get volunteers to work crowds at other activities that same weekend.

*— **Brent Frankenhoff***

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CBG #1656 August 2009

Cover art by Rod Pereira and José Pimentel

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EDITORIAL AND AD OFFICE
700 E. State St.
Iola, WI 54990-0001
(715) 445-2214
FAX (715) 445-4087
www.cbgxtra.com
cbg@krause.com

SENIOR EDITOR
Maggie Thompson

EDITOR
Brent Frankenhoff

DESIGNER
Shawn Williams

AD SALES REPRESENTATIVE
Shannon Piotrowski - ext. 13232
shannon.piotrowski@fwmedia.com

AD SALES ASSISTANT
Lori Hauser - ext. 13239

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
Paul Kennedy

PUBLISHER
Dianne Wheeler

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Tony Isabella, Andrew Smith

CONTRIBUTORS
Jack Abramowitz, Brian Douglas Ahern, Bernard C. Cormier, Peter David, George Hagenauer, Jim Johnson, John Kovalic, Kurt Anthony Krug, John Lustig, Michelle Nolan, Karen O'Brien, John Petty, Craig Shutt, Chris Smigliano, Beau Smith, Michael Tierney, Andrew Wahl, Brett Weiss, Aaron Williams, Timothy J. Wood

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Vice President, IT/ CIO, Mike Kuehn
Finance Manager, Ken Greenwood
Director of Events, Sara Dumford
Circulation Director, Debra Westmass
Newsstand Director, Susan Rose
Director of Production, Vicki Whitford

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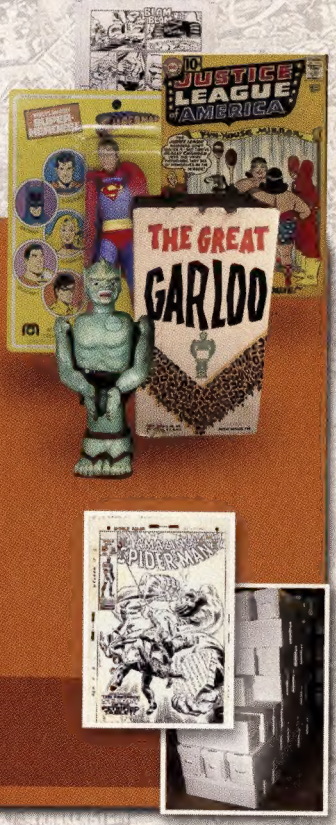

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CLEARED FOR (RE)LAUNCH

The return of Barry Allen and the evolution of Power Girl

by **ANDREW A. "CAPTAIN COMICS" SMITH**
Contributing Editor

At least four people have called themselves "The Flash." Power Girl has had three distinct origins. But DC is confident enough in these two long-running characters to relaunch them — again.

April saw the first issue of *Flash: Rebirth*, a five-issue mini-series re-establishing the formerly deceased Barry Allen as The Fastest Man Alive. May witnessed *Power Girl* #1, launching Power Girl's first ongoing title after years on teams, in mini-series, and as a popular guest star.

Why go back to this well again? What will be different? And how will it affect the DC universe? To answer these questions, I talked to DC Universe Executive Editor Dan DiDio, *Flash* writer Geoff Johns, and *Power Girl* writers Jimmy Palmiotti and Justin Gray. And they made it clear that these weren't any ordinary relaunches: They intend to peel back to the nucleus of these characters and build out from there.

"Every time we try to retrofit something or change something, we add extra layers that are unessential to the character," DiDio said. "And by stripping them down to their core essence, to where the character originally came from, it's a lot easier to build stories than constantly to adjust, change, and explain."

While Jay Garrick, the Golden Age Flash, inspired Barry Allen (as shown in *Showcase* #4 (Oct 56) and dozens of stories since), Geoff Johns shows that Barry had an influence on Jay as well in *Flash: Rebirth* #1.

Flash Facts

The obvious question about the return of Barry Allen is: Why do it? He died a satisfying, heroic death in the 1985-86 *Crisis on Infinite Earths* after a 30-year (cough) run. He was immediately, and successfully, replaced by his former protégé Kid Flash, Wally West. Wouldn't the return of Barry Allen kick Wally (and all of his fans) to the back of the bus? And why deflate the dramatic death scene in *Crisis?*

DiDio's response: "When it comes to Flash, this is a highlight for me as part of DC Comics: the return of Barry Allen as The Flash. I know his death was one of the seminal stories told — but Barry Allen is truly one of my favorite characters. And Geoff and I have been talking about this now for years, and the fact that we're actually here at this spot and we've got him coming out in his own book is an exciting moment."

So DiDio's a fan. And, despite becoming a *Flash* reader during the Wally era, Johns is also a Barry booster.

"I've always been a Flash fan, even when no one was talking about Flash," he said. "Jay Garrick, Wally West, Barry Allen, Bart Allen — I just like the Flash universe and the Flash characters. I'm really excited about working with The Flash again and working with Barry Allen. I think he's a fantastic character and I think we're going to have a really good time with the book."

As to the "whys," Johns was more specific. "I think that's what *Flash: Rebirth* is all about. The answers are all in there. But whenever I get on these characters, my goal has always been to kind of rebuild their world, their mythology — as with *Green Lantern* and *JSA*."

Johns, of course, is the mastermind behind the successful return of Hal Jordan as Green Lantern and the revival of The Justice Society as a fundamental element of the DC universe. As part of the latter, he (along with screenwriter David Goyer) unsnarled the Byzantine continuity of Hawkman, which had made The Winged Wonder unusable for years. Johns is 3 for 3, which bodes well for Barry Allen.

DiDio said his star writer is already on the right track. "One of the things that's great about the series is that Geoff found a brilliant way to contemporize Barry, to make him extremely relevant to the universe."

Johns has come up with an amazing hook, all right, one that is right up the former police scientist's alley: *CSI: 52*. "The stuff I really want to focus on is Barry as a crime-solver," Johns said. "But his crimes are on the crazy '60s-physics level. A murder could span across dimensions or ancient cities or crazy places that are real cities. Or he could find a body where the crime is unsolvable through normal means and kinda taking that *CSI* approach but putting it on a greater scale of wonder and scope. He solves crimes that are unbelievably bizarre and unexplainable. And they take him to different places and strange foes and bizarre criminals."

Which ought to settle the complaints some fans have made about Barry: that he was boring. It's a rap Johns labeled "ridiculous."

"That's like saying Kyle Rayner's whiny,"

Johns said of the 20-something Green Lantern, whom some ridiculed in the '90s as the first slacker superhero. "From a stereotypical kind of worldview, you could do that to *any* character. You could throw any kind of claim at a character. Barry was a 'stiff,' 'Hal Jordan was arrogant,' 'Kyle Rayner was whiny,' or 'Guy Gardner was a jerk' — you could do that with any character. For me, that's just someone who has a bias or doesn't want to give a character a chance. None of these characters are boring. Characters are only as boring as the writers make them."

Johns also dismissed the concern that, with the return of Barry and Bart Allen (who was resuscitated in *Final Crisis: Legion of 3 Worlds*, also written by Johns), four Flashes are too many.

"It's the same thing as Green Lantern," he said. "You know, you've got Guy Gardner, John Stewart, Kyle Rayner, and Hal Jordan: all very different characters. Bart Allen, Jay Garrick, Wally West, and Barry Allen: all very different characters, as well.

"None of these characters are boring. Characters are only as boring as the writers make them."
— Geoff Johns

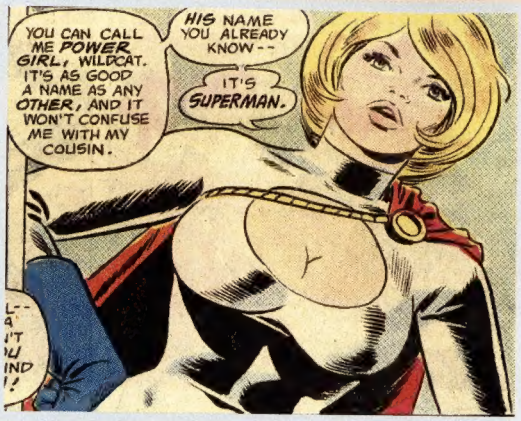
"And some of that differentiation's gonna happen within the pages of *Flash: Rebirth* and beyond. It's why I'm delving into Barry Allen's past in this series, because he's new to most readers. I think it's important to explore him and what his attitude is, what he believes in, what he focuses on, and what his priorities are, compared to Wally, Jay, and Bart. They're all very different characters but they all have the same moral code, just like the Green Lanterns."

And, Johns said, Wally will have a new costume at the end of *Flash: Rebirth* to help differentiate him. Speaking of The Crimson-Haired Comet, whither the man who has been filling Barry's boots for most of the last 23 years?

"Wally West will be seen primarily in *Titans*," DiDio said, "but we're going to explore Wally's character a lot more. And we'll be telling stories with Wally in a way where people who are fans of Wally when he first appeared as The Flash will enjoy: the Mike Baron days."

In addition to Wally and the other Flashes, Johns promised new supporting characters and the return of many old favorites. Dexter Myles, The Flash Museum, Barry's old boss Captain Darryl Frye, and Iris West Allen are all on tap for whatever Flashy series follows *Flash: Rebirth*. As a sweetener, another old friend appears: Hal Jordan.

"One thing which I've really been focused on is that Flash and Green Lantern have always gone hand in hand," Johns said. "I want to explore that. But it's going to be more like good cop/bad cop. Barry's 'good cop' and Hal's 'bad cop.' It's like time and space, where Barry covers time and Hal covers space. I want to build up Barry and Hal — and Hal's already on his way — as being cornerstones of a greater sub-universe, a greater part of the epic and mythic scope of the DC universe. That's my goal, to elevate these characters to more than just the solo series, to a world in and of itself."



Girl Power

Karen "Power Girl" Starr first appeared in the pages of *All-Star Comics* #58 (Feb 76) as the Earth-2 Supergirl. Now, after many revamps and retcons, that's what she is again.

"At this particular moment," DiDio said, "what they just did with *JSA* is that they were able to go back and reveal the origin as people truly remember it, from Earth-2. Rather than twisting it and turning it, trying to retrofit various aspects of all the stories, to make her work in continuity, we were able to go back to the origin that makes the most sense and build a story out from there.

"You have an easy reference point as a starting point for a *Power Girl* series. She's the Supergirl of Earth-2. Now we're off to the races. If you try to explain magic and all these different things, Arion and Atlantis and everything else that was going on there, it has absolutely nothing to do with the character as she exists right now."

Telling her story are writers Jimmy Palmiotti and Justin Gray, who, along with artist Amanda Conner, worked on the character as a prominent guest star in the *Terra* mini-series. DiDio said they have "captured the essence of who Power Girl is." And they echo their boss' take on not being slaves to Power Girl's complicated and contradictory history.

Gray said, "We're not all that concerned with trying to fit all of her continuity into one package. I realize that's a popular trend lately, but 'just pick up and read the book' is our philosophy. Stop worrying about how everything fits moving forward."

Palmiotti said the pair felt the need to "focus on the today and tomorrow of the character

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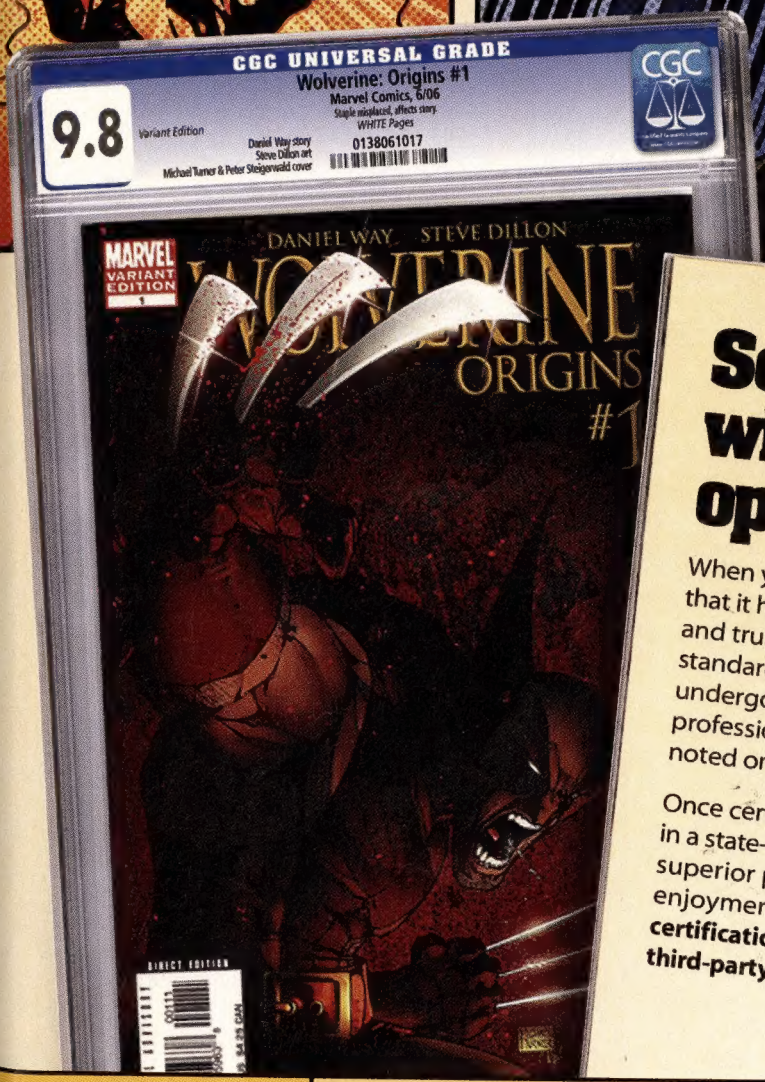

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and try to understand that there is a responsibility for us to really make this book something fresh. I don't want to drag in a ton of backstory that involves the rest of the DC universe and use it as a crutch or sales gimmick.

"Sure, we visit some things from her past here and there but, as you will see, when we *do* visit them, we make sure they have to do with the current continuity of the series. We understand that the new people coming on board deserve to have us keep them in the loop. It's only fair."

But, despite her multiple retcons and iffy track record, DiDio said Power Girl has always been popular. "I consider Power Girl our Silver Surfer character: one who was introduced in an interesting way, has played an incredibly strong supporting role, has appeared in so many of our big stories — but she's never really had a chance to shine on her own. To stand alone. And I think she's much stronger than just a supporting character."

Palmiotti concurred, adding that "the fans were demanding" a *Power Girl* title. "DC wanted to try it and the guys in charge liked what we did on a few other books and rolled the dice and gave us a shot. When we finally got Amanda interested in the project, it was a done deal.

"As far as track record, the last series Amanda and I worked on with Power Girl (*JSA Classified* #1-4, Sep-Dec 05) had three issues out of four going into second and third printings. The time was right, and, judging by the response so far, a lot of people agree."

Still, as Gray said, "expectations are low" for the title. "Everyone has preconceived notions about the character," he said. "She's 'a component of a team and not a star,' she's 'confusing and redundant,' she's 'a breast joke,' and so on. The challenge and goal is simply to make an enjoyable comic book and not worry about anything else."

Palmiotti and Gray said that the character's civilian ID — Karen Starr, CEO of Starrware — will remain. And her JSA teammates will appear as story needs dictate, Gray said, but not to the point at which the title "becomes a *JSA* spin-off rather than a Power Girl book."

Her powers may be slightly different from the standard Kryptonian set, they said, due to the cosmos shifting a bit in *Final Crisis*. And there will be plenty of new supporting characters at Starrware to stir up stories. Another aspect that won't follow Power Girl from previous series is the angst about her origins. Some readers complained that Starr sometimes came off as whiney, as when she explained the hole in her costume's chest area as being representative of her missing heritage.

Gray said, "This is why it is important for us to approach the book from a fresh perspective, at least in the sense that we're not going to ask new readers or casual readers to ingest decades of meandering continuity. We want people to be able to pick up the book and grow into it without slamming them in the face with her entire history. Yes we had to do some of that in the first issue just to cover the basics, but moving through the first arc we feel it is important to put that 'boo-hoo I have no home' mentality behind her. She's tall, beautiful, and can fly; not too many people are going sympathize with someone like that who complains all the time about how tough life is."

As to the costume, "we actually are going to make the hole bigger," Palmiotti said, laughing. "OK, maybe not."

So some things old, some things new, some things borrowed ... and, hey, the cape is blue.

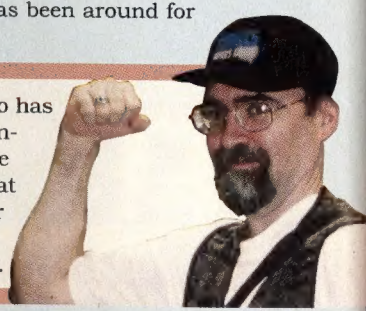
"It's one of those books that I'm excited about," DiDio concluded. "This isn't the third or fourth launching of a character with the hope that it will succeed. This really is the first time Power Girl has her own ongoing series. So from our standpoint it feels fresh, even though this is a character that has been around for 30 years."

Extras at CBGXtra!

There was so much more in The Captain's interviews with Dan DiDio, Geoff Johns, Jimmy Palmiotti, and Justin Gray, that we couldn't get it all to fit in this issue.

But fear not! Go to our website at *www.cbgxxtra.com* and you'll find more material in The Captain's sub-forum!

ANDREW SMITH, who has been writing professionally about comics since 1992, can be reached at *capncomics@aol.com* or on his message board, *www.captaincomics.us.*



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10 FAVORITE COMIC BOOK COVERS

A rambling list of favorites

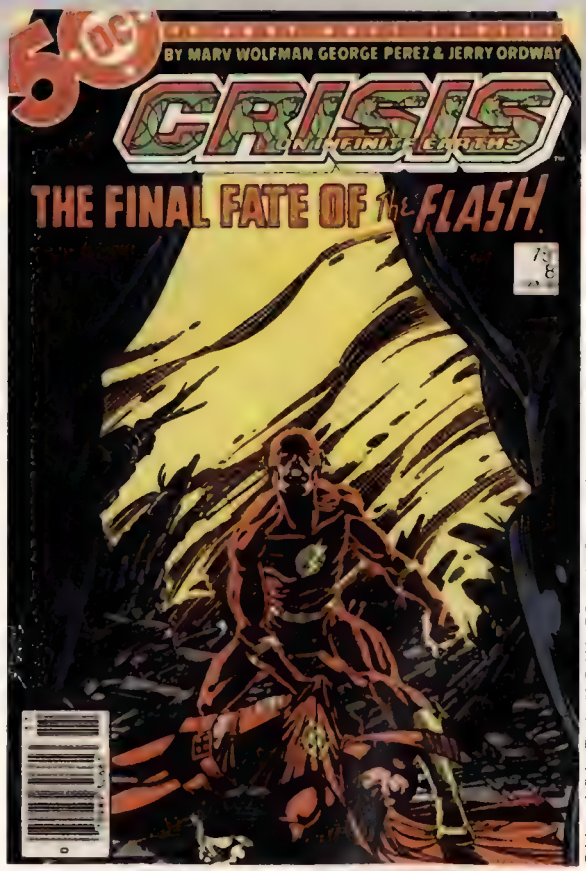
Jim Johnson has been freelancing for ***CBG*** continuously since 2001, writing reviews and occasional features as well as an *Obligatory Fight Scene* each month with co-conspirator John Petty. He's also the guilty party behind his *Ramblings about Comics and Stuff* columns as seen on CBGXtra.com. By day, though, he has a *real* job in the field of engineering, which he's desperately trying to hold onto as a means of financing his comics-buying habit and jaunts to as many comics conventions as he can afford to attend.

Said comics-buying habit extends back more than 30 years, when Jim spotted *Avengers* #168 (Feb 1978) at a newsstand and was instantly hooked. After years of incessant begging and pleading to various comic-book editors, one gave in and published his fan letter in *Amazing Spider-Man* #210, in the hopes that he would just go away. He didn't, though, and the thrill of seeing his name in print inspired him to try to become a real writer. He's still trying.

X-Men #141 © 1981 Marvel; cover by John Byrne and Terry Austin; scan courtesy of Heritage Comic Auctions

***X-Men* (1st series) #141 (Jan 81).** *"This cover had just about everybody at "hello." And the shocking, riveting, and influential story inside kept 'em."*

Orig. price: 50¢ Current NM price: $11



Crisis on Infinite Earths #8 © 1985 DC; art by George Pérez; scan courtesy of Brent Frankenhoff

***Crisis on Infinite Earths* #8 (Nov 85).** *"There has never been a more heroic image in comics, nor a more incredible story of self-sacrifice to back it up."*

Orig. price: 75¢ Current NM price: $5

Marvels #2 © 1994 Marvel; art by Alex Ross; scan courtesy of Brent Frankenhoff

***Marvels* #2 (Feb 94).** *"The Angel inspires both awe and fear in an image that's both very optimistic and very sad. The story exemplified the tragic side."*

Orig. price: $5.95 Current NM price: $6

Batman: The Dark Knight #1 © 1986 DC; art by Frank Miller, Klaus Janson, and Lynn Varley; scan courtesy of Brent Frankenhoff

***Batman: The Dark Knight* #1 (Mar 86).** *"For better or worse, both the cover and story inspired many a creator and ushered in a whole new kind of super-hero."*

Orig. price: $2.95 Current NM price: $25

American Flagg! #1 © 1983 Howard Chaykin; art by Chaykin; scan courtesy of Brent Frankenhoff

***American Flagg!* #1 (Oct 83).** *"A highly acclaimed and ground-breaking comic, but who would've guessed it from this brilliantly simple, no-nonsense cover?"*

Orig. price: $1 Current NM price: $3

Avengers #177 © 1978 Marvel; art by Dave Cockrum and Terry Austin; scan courtesy of Heritage Comic Auctions

***Avengers* (Vol. 1) #177 (Nov 78).** *"Doctor Donald Blake, not Thor, single-handedly trying to save a dozen dying Avengers? The surprising story led up to this very image."*

Orig. price: 35¢ Current NM price: $4

Zot! #30 © 1990 Scott McCloud; art by McCloud; scan courtesy of Maggie Thompson

***Zot!* #30 (Mar 90).** *"The subdued cover evokes a childhood pleasure, while the inside looks at the trivialities of adulthood. Both are examples of understated brilliance."*

Orig. price: $2 Current NM price: $2

Watchmen #11 © 1987 DC; art by Dave Gibbons; scan courtesy of Maggie Thompson

***Watchmen* #11 (Aug 87).** *"This effective cover foreshadows the emotionally charged and chilling events in this psychologically tense issue."*

Orig. price: $1.50 Current NM price: $6

Acme Novelty Library #1 © 1993 Chris Ware; art by Ware; scan coutesy of Brent Frankenhoff

***Acme Novelty Library* #1 (Win 93).** *"No other series has been as exquisitely crafted as this one. This comic stood out on an artistic level unlike any other."*

Orig. price: $3.50 Current NM price: $10

Avengers #49 © 1968 Marvel; art by John Buscema; scan courtesy of Brent Frankenhoff

***Avengers* #49 (Feb 68).** *"Two of the good guys are tricked and head off with the bad guy, and this symbolic cover captures that perfectly."*

Orig. price: 12¢ Current NM price: $32

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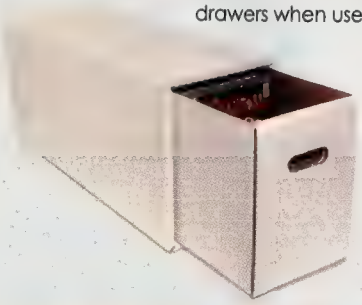

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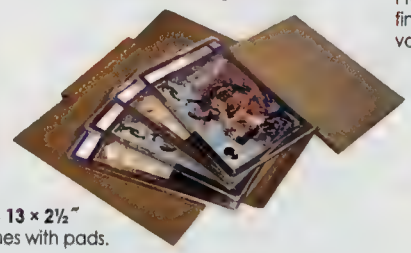

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It wasn't easy dating a hidden super-hero; for a glimpse, just read

THE DIARY OF ZELDA!

by **CRAIG SHUTT**

We got our first glimpse of Bobby and Hank's favorite hangout, the Coffee a-Go-Go, complete with Bernard the poet, in *X-Men* #7.

Dear Mr. Silver Age,

I've always been amazed by the girlfriends of super-heroes who date them in their civilian identities and never figure out the truth. If nothing else, I'd think they'd become irritated at being stood up and abandoned every time danger struck. Were they really as clueless as they seemed?

Gwen S.
Long Island, N.Y.

Mr. Silver Age says: I prefer to think that these young ladies were extraordinarily patient, forgiving, and understanding, Gwen. In a few rare cases, they probably were even in love with the big galoot and wanted to make things work against all indications that the course of true love was not running smoothly.

To be sure, danger seemed to rear its ugly head around these coosome twosomes way more often than you might expect, even in a super-villain center such as Manhattan. And when danger struck, mayhem always ensued. That kind of chaos naturally would separate couples and leave each to find safety.

Granted, our heroes never gained points for staying close to their lady loves to ensure they found a safe haven, leaving them open to charges of cowardice, panic, and concern only for their own skin. But they did have a semi-plausible excuse for not being around until (literally) the smoke cleared. At least, they had an excuse the first three or four times danger struck. That didn't carry some of them past the third date.

An example of what a young lady had to put up with can be seen in a recent volume I discovered: the personal diary of Zelda, last name unknown, a woman who dated Bobby Drake, better known as The X-Men's Iceman.

Zelda was Bobby's favorite date, although they didn't go stepping out too often, owing to Iceman's heavy schedule of pounding on evil mutants (and the requirements of a "Marvel time" monthly comic-book schedule). It's

possible, of course, that Zelda dated Bobby more often than we know and didn't record those pulse-pounding appointments in her diary (or in the senses-shattering scenes of *The X-Men* comic).

We'll have to hope that was the case and that those dates went smoothly. Because, sadly, many of the dates that we saw resulted in abrupt endings that left Zelda alone, at best scratching her head and at worst steaming. Fortunately, she often could commiserate with her BFF Vera Cantor, who suffered the same fate at the hands of Hank McCoy, aka The Beast.

Hank and Bobby often double-dated with Vera and Zelda, which led them to The Coffee A-Go-Go in Greenwich Village, where Zelda waitressed. This joint was about as happening of a groovy scene as one could find in the mixed-up Marvel madness that was super-hero downtime during the Silver Age. Not only did they dig the coffee beans, but they were able to groove to the vibes of Bernard the Poet, the café's resident hipster, who voiced verse that was understood only in the deep recesses of his own mind.

To give you an idea of what the zesty Zelda faced along her icy road to true love, I've excerpted the pages from her diary that dealt with her Drake dates. I've also filled in some of the missing details that Zelda wasn't privy to about her infuriating boyfriend.

SEPTEMBER 1964 (aka "The Return of The Blob!" in *The X-Men* #7).

Dear Diary: That nice Bobby Drake came into the café tonight and sat at one of my tables with his friend Hank and some chick (whose name I didn't catch). Was it a coincidence, or was destiny reaching out to me? Or was Bobby? Probably not, but a girl can dream, can't she?

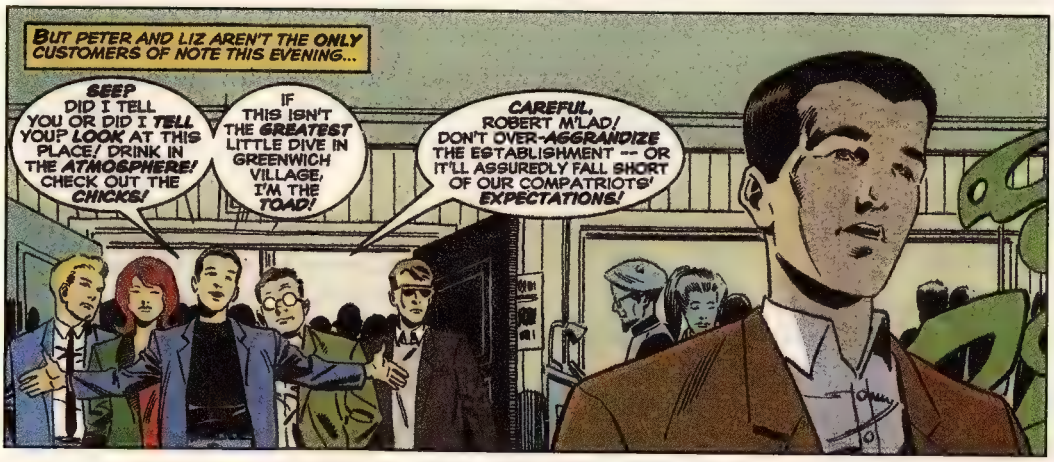
Hank complained about Bernard's poetry, but I heard Bobby try to explain the appeal. Bobby is so deep! I had a chance to flirt with him after Hank took off his shoes to unwind, and the amazing size of his feet caused a sensation with all the hep cats. They carried him off like a heroic champion, leaving Bobby all to me. I razzed him about not coming in more often, and he claimed to be "a real busy guy!" Excuse me for living!

Before I could think up a sizzling comeback, his friend Warren burst in and told him he had to go. I was amazed at how quickly Bobby responded, but he brushed off my questions by claiming Warren was "a super-powered mutant." Before I could make him tell me for real, both he and Hank scrammed. Better luck next time, I guess.

What Zelda didn't know: Hank and Bobby went out on the town (to visit, as Bobby put it, "The coolest coffee shop in Greenwich Village with the dreamiest waitress!") to celebrate their graduation from mutant school. Before they left, they learned that Professor Xavier was taking time away from the team and leaving Cyclops in charge.

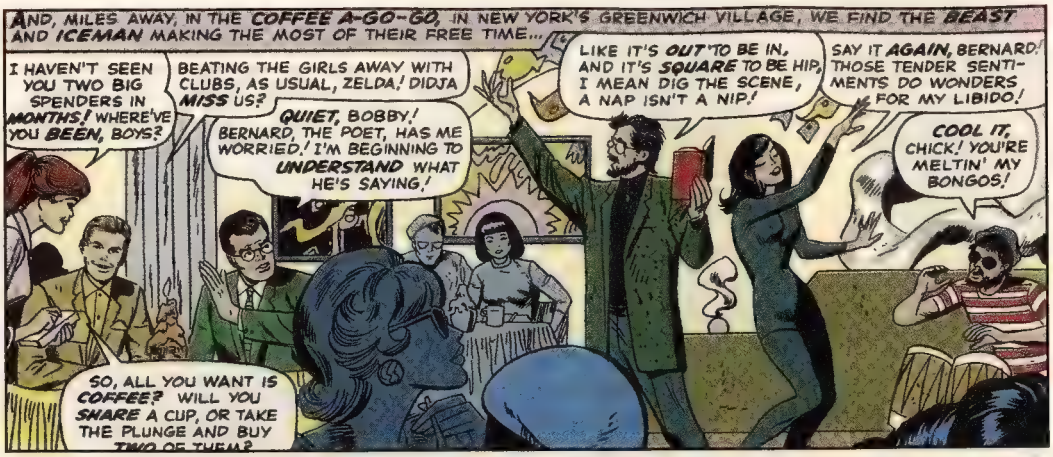
Thus, when the newly introduced Cerebro alerted Scott that The Blob was active again, Scott sent out word for the team to regroup. He reached Warren through his car radio, and Angel swung by to pick up the guys at the café. As they reformed at the mansion, they received a challenge from Magneto and his Brotherhood of Evil Mutants and went off to thwart the villains' plans. ***Spoiler alert:*** They did.

Bobby made some time with Zelda the waitress during her first appearance in the Marvel universe in *X-Men* #7. Nice suit, Bob.



Peter Parker was already in the house when Bobby brought the gang into the café for a bite (and to check out Zelda) in *Untold Tales of Spider-Man* #21.

While Professor X chatted with the creator of The Sentinels on TV, Bobby and Hank chilled out at the Coffee a-Go-Go in *X-Men* #14.



OCTOBER 1964 (aka "Menace!" in *Untold Tales of Spider-Man* #21 (May 97)).

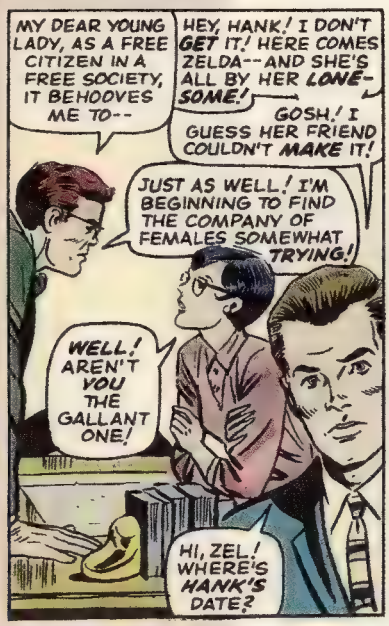
Dear Diary: Bobby came into the café tonight with a bunch of friends, including Hank and that Warren who had interrupted us last time. Bobby steered them into my section, and when I asked if he was springing for coffee all around, he announced that Warren was well off and asked for menus. That's my luck, all right — interested in the guy who's good at spending his friend's money!

But before they even ordered, some guy ran in to announce that mutants had taken over a nearby office! Can you imagine? Bobby's friends immediately jumped up and left, as did another guy sitting with his girlfriend. But I heard him say he was going to take photos. At least he had a good reason — even if his girlfriend was no happier about it than I was!

What Zelda didn't know: Peter Parker and Liz Allen were already listening to Bernard's latest reading (Liz was the fan, of course) when The X-Men arrived. Bobby steered the group to the café, hoping to see Zelda. "That little gal must have super powers," he told Hank, "because she melts my frosty little heart with nothing but a glance!"

They bolted to battle Menace, a mutant robbing a trading company so he could fund his mutant army's takeover of the world. It's good to have a goal. Spider-Man at first thought The X-Men were the evil-doers, but Cyclops convinced him otherwise, and they all tackled Menace and his mutant minions. ***Spoiler alert:*** They beat him, only to learn he'd been faking his powers and his minions were robots.

In *X-Men* #19, Zelda's plan to set up Hank with her BFF, Vera, didn't get off to a good start, setting the cantankerous tone for their relationship.



NOVEMBER 1965 (aka "Among Us Stalk ... The Sentinels!" in *The X-Men* #14).

Dear Diary: Guess who finally showed up at the café tonight? Bobby Drake! And boy, did he get me steamed! He came in with Hank and made a beeline for my section, like always. I ribbed Bobby about not having been in to see me "in months," but he gave me a flip answer about "beating the girls away with clubs, as usual."

Now for the good news: We were chatting while Hank made his usual caustic comments about Bernard's poetry, and Bobby asked me out! I played it cool, calling him "Diamond Jim" and telling him I'd think about it — but my heart was doing flip-flops! At last!

Now for the bad news: Before I could make it clear that I would love to go out, he and Hank got these startled looks on their faces and bolted! Bobby apologized, but boy, was I hot! I told him not to bother giving me a rain check. What nerve!

What Zelda didn't know: As Bobby chatted with Zel, they received a mental summons from Prof. X. The pals quickly changed into their costumes and headed for the roof, where Bobby created an ice slide that allowed them to slide all the way back to the mansion. That was one frictionless slide! They were the first to arrive at the TV studio where Xavier was being attacked by Dr. Bolivar Trask's Sentinels. ***Spoiler alert:*** The X-Men tracked down the Sentinel's hideout, and mucho mayhem ensued.

APRIL 1966 (aka "Lo! Now Shall Appear — The Mimic!" in *The X-Men* #19).

Dear Diary: That's it, I am officially swearing off Bobby Drake! I'd decided to forgive him for bolting last time and set up a double-date with my pal Vera. I arranged for them to meet us at the library where Vera works part-time, without telling them who Hank's date was. Big mistake!

When I arrived, Hank already was arguing with Vera! He must have been feeling anxious about the date and was browsing the pre-school books. Vera pointed that out, Hank got embarrassed, and they nearly came to blows! Boy, did they feel stupid when I introduced them as dates!

We no sooner got that smoothed over than we ran into Vera's acquaintance, Calvin Rankin, who was jealous of her being on a date! He took a swing at Hank, and they both became really athletic, bounding around and hitting each other! Bobby came to Hank's rescue, but Calvin hit him with some ice! Some construction workers chased off Calvin, figuring he must be some kind of mutant. What a disaster!

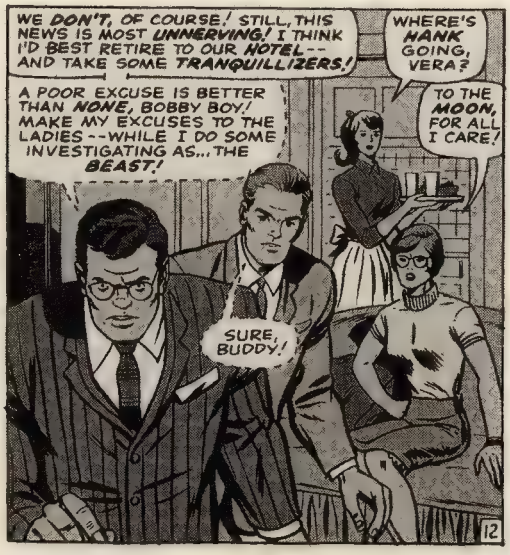
What Zelda didn't know: Calvin, as we all know, was the title-featured Mimic, who could take on the powers of any nearby mutant. He ultimately followed Jean Gray to the mansion, where he battled the team and took Marvel Girl hostage. ***Spoiler alert:*** That didn't last.

JULY 1966 (aka "Divided, We Fall!" in *The X-Men* #22).

Dear Diary: I got my hopes up tonight that I'd have an uninterrupted date with Bobby, because he and Hank are vacationing in Manhattan this week. And it almost worked! We got off to our usual rocky start after Hank mistook some long-haired guy for Vera (from the back, fortunately)! That irritated Vera, who saw the whole scene. What a bad vibe! Things went smoothly after that, with the guys taking us to see *Thunderball* (again).

But when we went back to my pad for an after-movie snack, I made the mistake of letting Bobby turn on the radio for some mood music. Instead, he heard a news report of The X-Men being sighted in Central Park, which unnerved the boys. Hank became so upset that he returned to their hotel, leaving Vera in the lurch! Bobby stuck around, but with Vera simmering, he decided to go check on Hank. Those two are something else!

What Zelda didn't know: The newscast lured Hank (and the others) to Central Park, where each was captured by Count Nefaria's minions — Hank by The Porcupine (Oh, the shame of it, Hank!) and Iceman later by The Eel, during his battle with The Unicorn. ***Spoiler alert:*** All of the X-Men later escaped and foiled the plot.



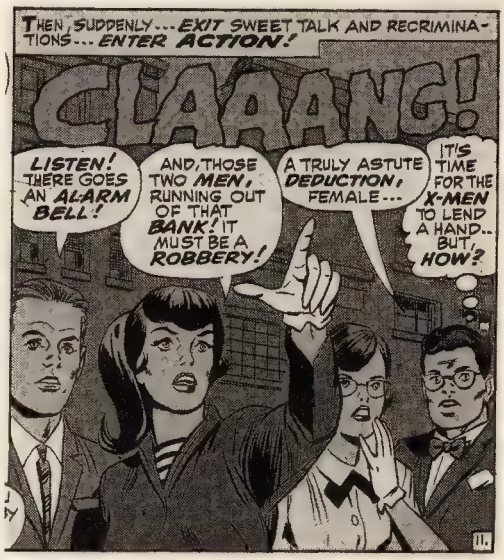
SEPTEMBER 1966 (aka "The Plague of The Locust!" in *The X-Men* #24).

Dear Diary: I'm about to give up on Bobby! He canceled our date at the last minute again due to "business." I called Vera to complain, and she said Hank did the same thing. This is really getting old.

What Zelda didn't know: Professor X had kept the team at the mansion to help study a giant locust that had attacked them under the direction of The, um, Locust. So Bobby and Hank's dates never happened. ***Spoiler alert:*** They exterminated The Locust.

DECEMBER 1966 (aka "Re-Enter: The Mimic!" in *The X-Men* #27).

Dear Diary: At last! Bobby and I had a groovy double date with Vera and Hank, even though it was interrupted like all of our dates seem to be. Today's excitement came when we stopped for hot dogs while strolling around



After one of their most successful dates in *X-Men* #22, the boys heard a radio broadcast that caused them to desert the girls and fall into a trap.

Wouldn't you just know it? While strolling through the city, our fabulous foursome encountered a bank robbery in *X-Men* #27.

In *X-Men* #31, Bernard the poet's "Ode to a Yo-Yo" left the girls a little more impressed than the boys, as usual.

Manhattan. I had to buy, of course, but what's new? I don't call Bobby "Diamond Jim" just for grins!

Vera was nagging Hank for walking out on so many dates, and Hank seemed genuinely contrite. But before they could resolve this latest spat, two armed men robbed the nearby bank! Vera and I rushed off to see what was happening, and we lost track of the boys. Fortunately, they caught up to us later. Hank tried to explain what happened, but Vera waved it away, disgusted. Frankly, I would have been interested to hear why they didn't follow us! Are they really that sensitive?

What Zelda didn't know: As soon as she and Vera ran off, Bobby and Hank changed into their super-suits and chased the crooks — only to find that Spider-Man had beaten them to it. They invited Spidey to join the team, at Professor X's mental request. Xavier feared a new mutant menace would strike while they were at low ebb, with The Angel injured. The Wall-Crawler declined, having recently decided against joining The Avengers (in *Spider-Man Special* #3). Instead, The Mimic joined the team but was mind-controlled by The Puppet Master. ***Spoiler alert:*** A revived Angel saved the day, but PM escaped. Darn.

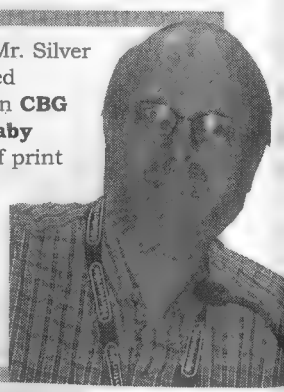
APRIL 1967 (aka "We Must Destroy The Cobalt Man!" in *The X-Men* #31).

Dear Diary: It happened again! Honestly, I don't know why Vera and I put up with those two. They always seem to run off before our dates end properly! Today, Bobby asked us to meet them at the Coffee a Go-Go, and we grooved to Bernard's latest free-verse masterpiece, "Ode to a Yo-Yo."

Bobby got a little jealous when Bernard noticed my enthusiasm and joined us after his performance. But while Bernard was raving about how in tune I was with his poetic nature, the espresso I'd bought him froze up and he couldn't drink it! That cooled his interest in us, too. Then, while the four of us were frugging on the dance floor (Hank does a fabulous monkey), the boys got that glazed look in their eyes and just took off!

I told Vera that their sudden exits were becoming too chronic for my taste, and she agreed. "I could understand being stood up," she told me, "but in the middle of a date?" As they left, the boys apologized — but it didn't stop them from going!

What Zelda didn't know: Hank and Bobby had received another mental summons from the Prof. They hitched a ride in Warren's convertible after the boys realized they had no money (the cabbie agreed Hank's watch would cover the fare as far as they'd gone). Warren had come from his own date with an old girlfriend, Candy Southern, whom he'd met while checking out the new Monkey's Paw go-go club. They joined Cyclops and Marvel Girl to battle the aforementioned Cobalt Man. ***Spoiler alert:*** They beat him.



Known to fans worldwide as "Mr. Silver Age," **CRAIG SHUTT** has waxed nostalgic about comics of old in **CBG** since 1992. His latest book, **Baby Boomer Comics**, is now out of print but remains available at online bookstores, eBay, and flea markets internationally. Send comments and suggestions to **craigshutt@ameritech.net**.

"Ask Mr. Silver Age" is © 2009 Craig Shutt

Mr. Silver Age's Mail Chute

Is Super-Friends all ages?

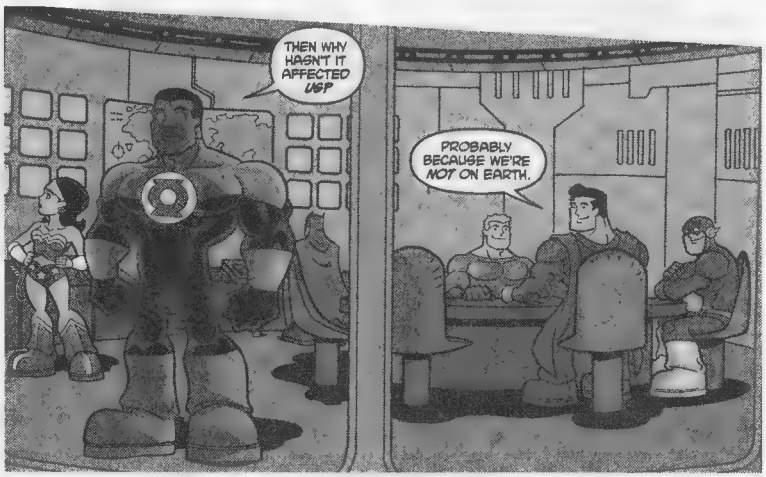
Dear Mr. Silver Age: Having enjoyed your column for many years, I was disappointed to see you dismiss *Super Friends* as "creepy-looking" in the letters column of ***CBG*** #1652 (Apr 09).

When I first started writing *Super Friends*, I figured there'd be some percentage of adult comics fans who'd decide they hated it simply because they couldn't get past the characters' big feet. But from what I've seen of your tastes, I figured you'd be one of the grown-ups who'd see past the character designs and get a chuckle out of the series. After all, there aren't that many books these days that routinely include nods to such Silver Age stalwarts as Super Turtle, Cap's Hobby Shop, and, of course, Mopee.

Is *Super Friends* for kids? You bet — and thank God for that. I've long felt that, back in the '80s and '90s, we lost an entire generation of comics fans because everyone was so busy trying to prove "comics aren't for kids" that we forgot that what we should have been proving is that comics aren't *only* for kids. So I'm thrilled that nowadays there are lots of different kinds of comics for many different audiences.

The look of *Super Friends* might be (as the cover copy says) "based on the hit toy line from Mattel," but its real goals are to get kids running around the house with a towel over their shoulders, yelling, "I'm Superman!" and to do what super-heroes do best: inspire kids to do the right thing, just because it's the right thing to do. My favorite fan letters are the ones that say, "I just got my first comic book. It was *Super Friends*. Here's something nice I did so I can be next issue's Super Friend of the Month ..."

Sholly Fisch



(I agree wholeheartedly that we need more comics for kids, Sholly. I don't consider many current mainstream super-hero comics to be suitable for all ages, and that's a shame.

I've been a fan of DC's "animated" titles up through the recent ***Legion of Super-Heroes in the 31st Century*** *and* ***Teen Titans Go!*** *series. I enjoyed the "Done in One" style and plotting that entertained all ages. Some of the recent kid-targeted ones, such as* ***Tiny Titans, Super-Friends*** *and* ***Supergirl: Cosmic Adventures in the 8th Grade****, haven't appealed to me, possibly because they are closely aimed at their age groups rather than what I'd consider all-ages, as the cartoon-based comics were. I am enjoying* ***Billy Batson and the Magic of Shazam!*** *and* ***Batman: The Brave & the Bold*** *(as well as* ***Franklin Richards*** *and* ***Mini-Marvels****), so I haven't given up on these lighter-style books. If DC's targeted approach boosts their appeal among younger kids and gets them reading, then losing me as a reader won't be a great loss.*

Is the JLA's big-eyed, smiley-faced, big-booted look in *Super Friends* too distracting for older readers to accept?

Super Friends **offers a variety of tips of the hat to Silver Age fans, including these impish guys.**

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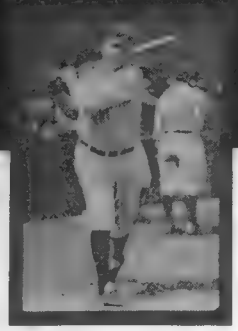
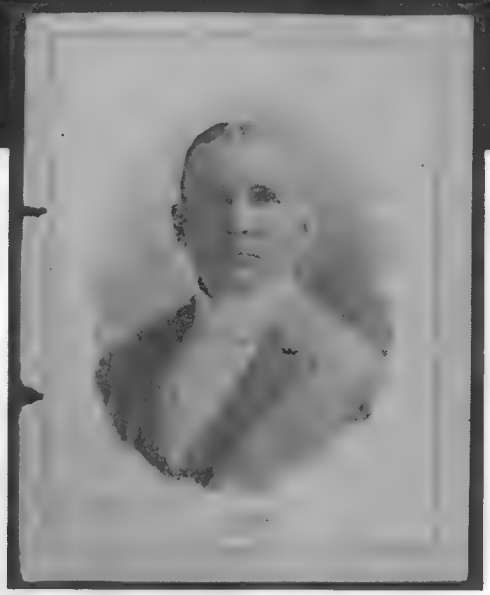

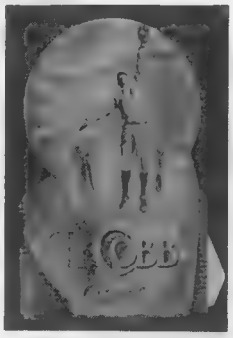
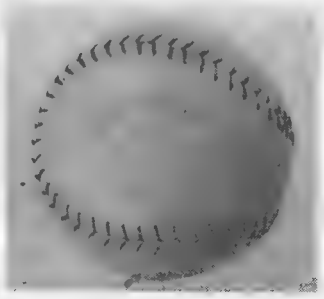

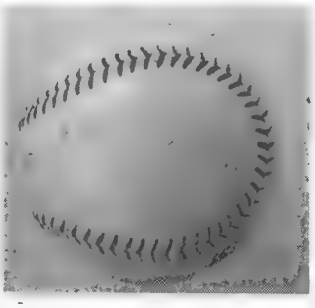

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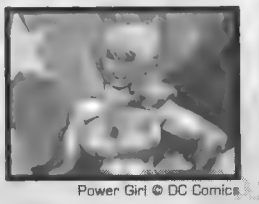
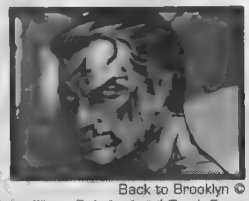

Power Girl © DC Comics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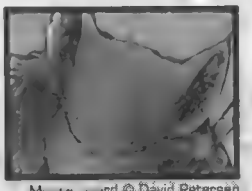
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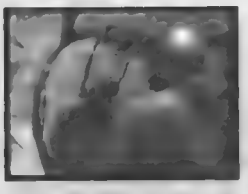

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IMPACT

Life on the other side of the table

by BEAU SMITH

Gary Kwapisz, Chuck Dixon, Beau, Todd Fox

We've all heard, "The grass is greener on the other side of the fence." As we all know, once you've been on *both* sides of the fence you find out that sometimes it's true and other times you can't get back across the fence fast enough.

I've been in the comic-book business since 1987. Before that, I was the guy on the other side of the fence. I used to wonder if sitting there, signing your books, talking to the readers of your books, and answering questions on convention panels was all that I thought it was cracked up to be.

Yes it is — and much more.

Not so much from an ego-inflating way (although it *can* be, if you don't keep yourself in check) but more from a feeling of being accepted and having your work accepted. Writing comics is a strange place for your head to be. On one side, I'm confident about my ideas and ability to write a compelling story. On the other end, I'm also insecure enough to wonder if there will be anyone out there who will derive as much pleasure out of reading my stories as I have writing them. When it *does* happen, the payoff is huge. Sometimes that payoff is huge money-wise, as in the case of a Geoff Johns or Brian Michael Bendis — but the best payoff is knowing that you entertained someone you've never even met. (Not really. The money is better.) Hook more than one and you're on Cloud 9 (wherever that really is).

I can still remember the first time I did a convention as a professional writer and was placed behind the table to sign books. I hadn't been that nervous since my first wrestling match in junior high school. I was worried that no one would some to my table — and even *more* worried that, if they did, they'd look real puzzled and ask me who I was and why I was sitting there. (That *has* happened.)

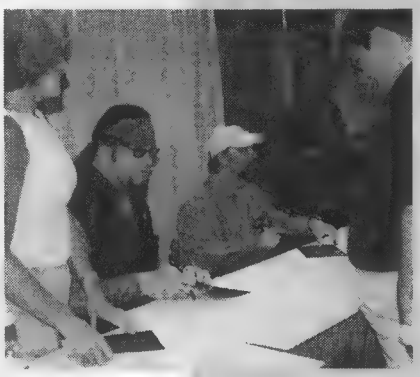
Sitting behind the table since 1987 has brought me almost every kind of experience, some absolutely great and others absolutely terrifying. More times than not, it's just been

great. If you ask comic-book professionals about what they've experienced behind the table, you'll get a wide variety of stories. Some are similar and others odd. It doesn't matter if you're like Jim Lee and have thousands of people lined up or like me and are forced to threaten people to line up: Behind the table is a great place to be.

The largest line I ever had for a signing was when I was writing *The Undertaker* comic book, based on the popular professional wrestler of the same name, for Brian Pulido's Chaos! Comics and the WWE. I had a signing to do that afternoon at San Diego Comic-Con, showed up, and, much to my surprise, there was a line that snaked around far out of my sight. Ended up there were an estimated 1,500 that came to the table for books to be signed. As I like to tell it (and always do), they came because of my amazing ability to weave an action-packed story. Truth be told, it was because The Undertaker was there signing with me. We had a great time. He was in reality a good ol' Texas boy and nice, not only to me, but to all the fans as well. We talked basketball and the art of catching armadillos.

Random fans and Beau

On the other end of the spectrum, I once did a show in the Midwest with my good buddies Billy Tucci and Chuck Dixon where, for an entire weekend, next to no one showed up. Hard to say where the true blame lay, but it was one looooooong weekend. Thank goodness the three of us had lots to talk about, being three like-minded amigos. We talked about politics, art, comics, pop culture, guns, films, TV, and sports and made fun of others who weren't there to defend themselves. (That's a favorite pastime of comic-book creators at conventions.) You know it was a bad time when you have a comic book workhorse like Chuck Dixon or a guy with the charisma of a cult leader like Billy Tucci and you can't get a line of more than two people. Personally, I just blamed Billy and Chuck for scaring off my loyal readers. (Worked for me.)



Beau's signing for Chaos' *Undertaker* comics were well attended. Oh, yeah, there was some other guy there as well.

The 1980s was a great time to be behind the table. All the publishers really got along in those days and mixed well together. Myself at Eclipse, Lou Bank at Marvel, and Bob Wayne at DC: We not only had our fingers on the pulse of what was happening, we had our hands around the throat of the industry. Nothing got by us and no secret escaped our ears. There was a strong bond among publishers as well as distributors then. Everyone mixed after hours without fear of job loss from those who wrote the paychecks. We were a stronger industry because of it. The 1980s were truly a high point for quality publishing, distribution, and growth. It was a good time to be on the other side of the table.

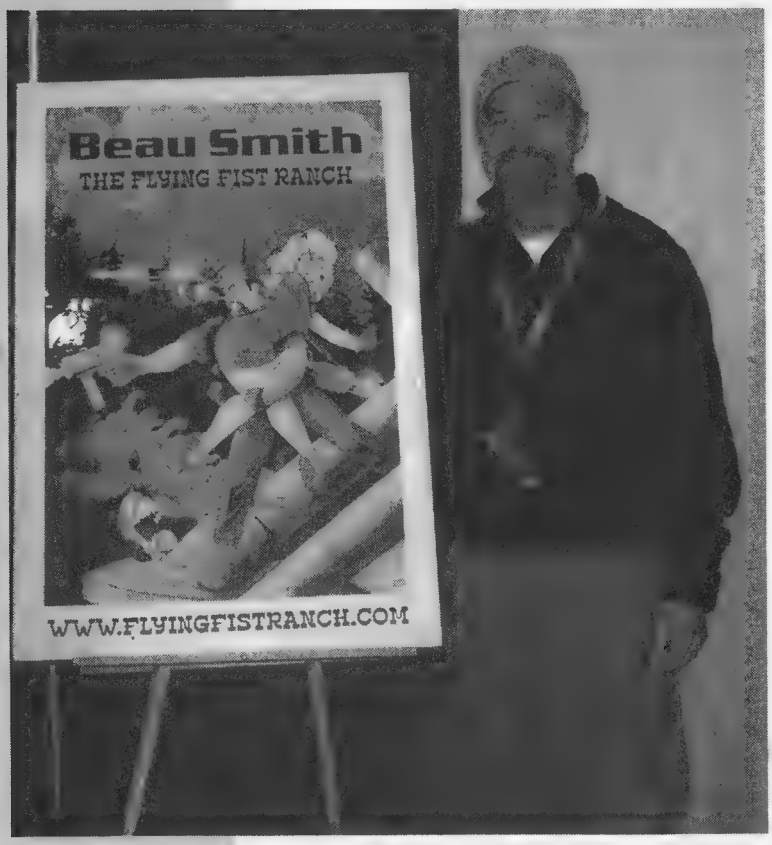
One of the downsides of having huge lines waiting at your table (not that I have any real experience there) is that you don't have as much time to really talk to your readers.

One of the downsides to not having enough folks in line is that you get one or two well-meaning folks who plant themselves there and stay too long. Those times are filled with

Moebius at my table!

awkward, silent moments of the guy's staring at you and your checking to see if he has a machete and a few severed heads behind his back. You also tend to get too much personal information about his personal battle with the festering boil on his back he insists on showing you.

Conan, Lost and Found, and *Punisher* artist Gary Kwapisz is the best I've ever seen at handling that kind of situation. Gary, always calm, always composed, had been asked by an odd guy of unknown personal hygiene to draw a sketch of then-popular newscaster Connie Chung, naked, at the bottom of a pool with an elf and Freddy Krueger all engaged in an act I won't repeat here in print. While everyone else behind the table was trying to be somewhat polite but get this guy to shuffle off to Buffalo, Gary looked up at him and began asking him questions that Sigmund Freud would be in awe of. Needless to say, the guy got all twitchy and couldn't wait to get away from Gary and his steely questions. The guy took his sketchbook of really strange sketches and made a beeline toward other artists who looked like they might bend to his "you don't wanna know" requests. After the guy had left, Gary turned to the rest of us and said, "You guys just don't know how to talk to people." It was a classic moment. Always be scarier than the scary person in front of you.



One of the things I enjoy most about being on the other side of the table is when someone hauls up a complete run of a book that I've done or maybe even a book I wrote that I've forgotten about doing. I have had the pleasure of signing complete runs of *Guy Gardner: Warrior* (DC) a few times (#20 through #44 and two annuals). Once, a nice young lady had me sign *every* comic book and story that I'd ever done. That was an amazing moment for me. I don't think I even *own* all those stories. I can't imagine what that would be like for someone like Stan Lee or Joe Kubert. I'd guess nearly impossible — but fun to think about just the same.

There have been times when I've been at a very busy convention and I've have long lulls between people coming to my table. Once, the creator at the table beside me felt bad to see me sitting there with no one around and felt he needed to "cheer me up." I explained to him that I was fine with it — and I was telling the truth. It gave me time to watch folks having fun, to check out the whole, huge scene, and to relax for a while. It's kinda like sitting on the beach and watching the ocean ... only with no ocean, sand, breeze, girls in bikinis, or sun. Maybe he *should've* cheered me up.

If you're an aspiring comic-book creator and looking forward to being the person behind the table someday, I hope you get to experience it. It's another way that comic books prove to be the common bond that ties together so many different people from very different walks of life. Don't let your ego overstep your talent. Make your time on the other side of the table *mean* something, not only to the readers, but to yourself. If you're at a convention or store signing, large or small, make sure you stop by my table and shake my paw. Just remember that the table ain't a couch and you can't crash on it. I'm friendly for only about five minutes at a time.

BEAU SMITH invites questions, answers, thoughts or wonderful items of worth to The Flying Fist Ranch, P.O. Box 706, Ceredo, WV 25507. E-mail Beau at *beau@flyingfistranch.com* or visit his website: *www.flyingfistranch.com*

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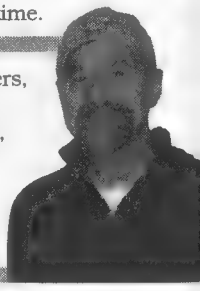

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Pursuing pirates while praising publishers

Avast, ye scurvy dogs!

by **TONY ISABELLA**

The number one rule of thieves is that nothing is too small to steal.

— Jimmy Breslin

My friend and fellow columnist Peter David got himself into a bit of an online fracas recently over his reporting some copyright infringement to Marvel. I think his mistake was giving what I will euphemistically call a rodent's posterior to the bleatings of those I most un-euphemistically call thieves, crooks, robbers, pilferers, stealers, purloiners, filchers, and, of course, pirates.

You see, what Peter did in this instance, I do about once a month.

Even when I have no vested interest in the material being stolen, pilfered, filched, and pirated.

Internet piracy concerns me as, I suspect, it does most people who make their living in the entertainment fields. However, there are fans who believe they have some technology-given ownership to anything they can scan into their computer and send throughout cyberspace, regardless of whether or not the work in question has been legally copyrighted by the creator or the company for whom the creator did the work.

Some of my favorite mailing groups exist for the purpose of allowing comic-book and pulp-magazine fans to share the covers of those publications with their fellow fans. I've yet to see anything posted to the groups that didn't fall within fair usage: that which the law allows to be circulated for educational and/or historical purposes. I've used cover scans in my own online columns and have no problem defending their use.

Where the problem lies for me is when fans determine they have a right to "publish" complete works, both comics and prose, online, *sans* permission from the owners. That's where presumption of fair usage becomes outright theft.

On occasion, I get embroiled in the online discussions of this issue. In going through old files, I discovered my half of one such discussion, which I have edited into a *faux* question-and-answer session for your edification.

Question: *Wouldn't your position make groups such as those you claim to enjoy completely illegal?*

Answer: I can easily make the case that the cover scans that appear in these groups are fair usage for educational and/or historical purposes.

Q: *What's the harm in sharing copyrighted works, if they're currently out of print?*

A: It's when works are "mass produced," whether for profit or no, that the problems arise. If copyright owners don't protect their copyrights, they risk the works going into the public domain.

The "I want it and that's all that matters" crowd tries to equate quiet, single-copy sharing with the larger "mass-produced" issue. If you make a single copy of the rare *Tony Isabella's Mashed Potato Marauders* to share with a pal, I'm going to pretend not to notice. But, if you start sharing *MPM* on a mass basis, then, much as I love you, I have to crush you until you're a pasty substance. Because I can't let you blow any future deal by allowing *MPM* to fall into the public domain.

Q: *Whether or not works are in the public domain, why should we "respect" the current copyright holder, who is likely not even a relative of the creator and who probably has no plans to publish any versions of these works himself?*

A: Works in public domain can be reproduced to your heart's content. Copyrighted works are someone's property and do not belong to you in any way, shape, or form.

Q: *Even if my sharing the copyrighted works wouldn't hurt the current copyright holder's profits?*

A: It's not your call as to whether something would or would not hurt the owner's profits.

Q: *This is frustrating. It all comes down to greed, doesn't it?*

A: Yes. Yours.

It's even more frustrating for those folks who have to protect the copyrights from falling into the public domain. Most copyright holders won't get bent out of shape over quiet sharing between friends. It's when sharing rises to the level of mass production that they have to take action.

Wanting something doesn't make "stealing" right. *Being able* to "steal" something doesn't make it right.

Q: *Some properties have no value to their creators and owners and never will. Why should I respect their defending their rights to absurd limits?*

A: Because *you* don't have the right to determine the value of any property to its creator or owner. It's not yours.

Many fans simply don't "get" why creators and copyright owners defend their property. I fear some of them won't ever get it until it's their work being stolen.

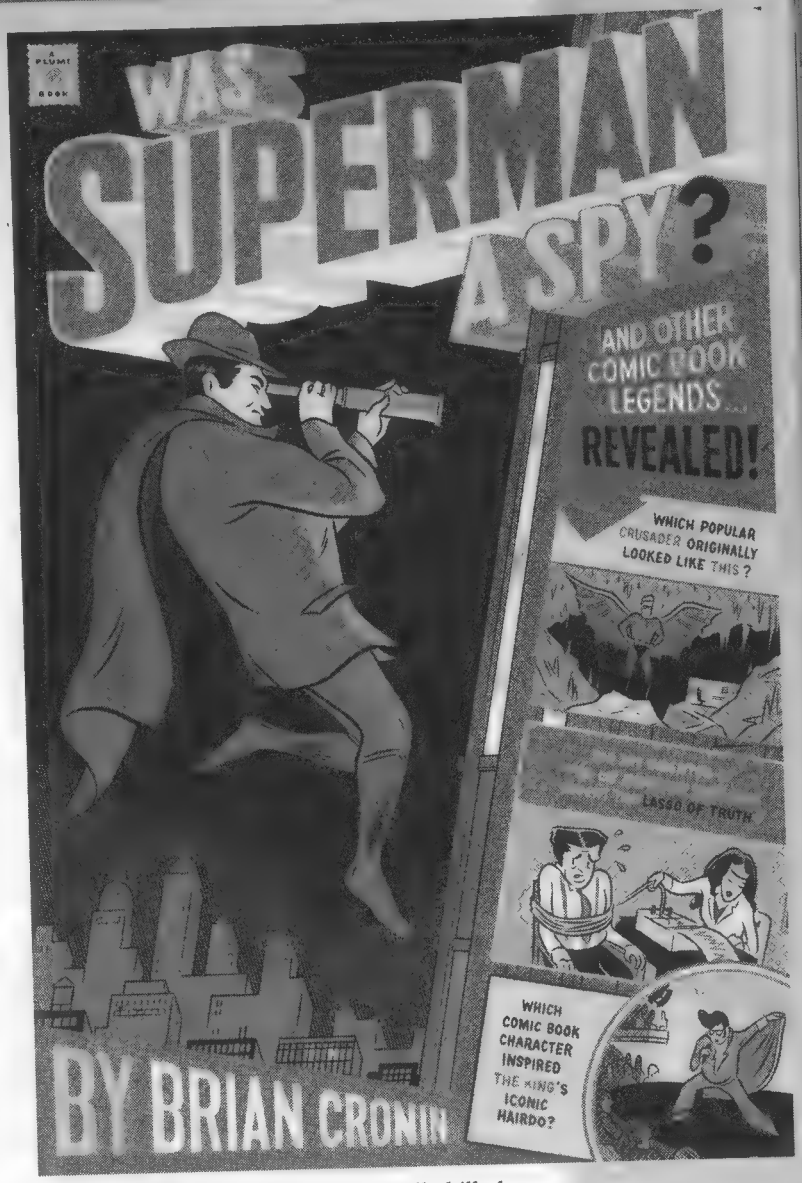
Q: *So you report online pirates to the creators and publishers whose works are being stolen?*

A: Yes, I do. I swore an oath on the skull of the pirate who first posted something of mine online without permission, an oath to fight pirates as long as I breathe. When I come across online piracy, or when someone e-mails me information on same, I forward the information to the copyright owners. Even when I don't much like the copyright owners.

Q: *Who appointed you protector of these creators and copyright owners?*

A: Come on. I come from a career of writing about vigilantes in tights. Think of me as a short, pudgy Spider-Man who, mercifully, doesn't wear spandex.

There are some things we can *all* agree on.



Here's the perfect book for flights to summer conventions and sanity breaks from summer conventions: Brian Cronin's ***Was Superman a Spy? and Other Comic Book Legends Revealed!*** (Plume, $14). Cronin is the writer-producer of the spiffy "Comics Should Be Good" blog at Comic Book Resources (*www.comicbookresources.com*). For the blog, Cronin writes a weekly "Comic Book Urban Legends Revealed" column that's one of my favorite online destinations and from which much of the contents of this book are drawn.

Cronin digs into the rumors that have enlivened comicdom since its earliest days and ferrets out their truth or falsehood. The characters, creators, people, and publications who appear in these pages are vast: Batman, Elvis Presley, the official newspaper of Hitler's SS, gorillas of varying intellects and sizes, Superman battling the Ku Klux Klan, the crime comic-book writer who actually killed someone, Mickey Mouse attempting suicide, Spider-Man, *Star Trek*'s Jonathan Frakes, and so many other wonders to amuse and astonish even the veteran comics fan.

Full disclosure. Your faithful Tipster pops up a couple times in the body of the book and is thanked by the author for supplying information. I consider whatever small assistance I provided to be public service for the good of all mankind. At least, that portion of mankind who loves comic books.

Was Superman a Spy? and Other Comic Book Legends Revealed! earns the full five out of five Tonys. It's enormous fun for comics fans of all ages.

http://us.penguingroup.com

Sanctum Books, which has done such a marvelous job reprinting the pulp-magazine adventures of Doc Savage and The Shadow, has now added a third great title to its lineup. ***The Avenger #1: "Justice, Inc." and "The Yellow Hoard"*** ($12.95) reprints the first two Dick Benson stories by Paul Ernst writing as Kenneth Robeson and adds a quartet of bonus features to the mix.

The Avenger combines elements of Doc Savage and The Shadow with a personal tragedy that changed Benson's life forever. Ernst brings real emotion to Benson; in the wake of that, his hero's devotion to justice and his ability to command the loyalty of brave and skilled assistants are utterly believable. The characters are well-crafted, as are the suspenseful stories.

As with all Sanctum publications, these stories are regarded as valued works of art. Though typographical errors are corrected, all the text "is reprinted intact in its original historical form, including occasional out-of-date ethnic and cultural stereotyping."

The original Paul Orban illustrations are also included, just as in the original pulp magazines.

The bonus features? There's an Avenger radio script from 1941. While it's not as good as the Ernst tales, it's an interesting look at a bygone era. Also on hand are a trio of essays by the always informative Will Murray and Editor-Publisher Anthony Tollin. That adds up to sensational bang for your bucks.

The Avenger #1: "Justice, Inc." and "The Yellow Hoard" earns the full five Tonys. Tollin will soon be adding a fourth title to the Sanctum roster with the publication of *The Whisperer #1* later this year.

www.shadowsanctum.com

One of the greatest comic-book characters you never heard of is back in ***Mr. Jigsaw #1*** (Redbud Studio Comics, $2.99). Created by Ron Fortier and Gary Kato, the "Man of a Thousand Parts" made his debut in 1983 in Charlton's *Scary Tales* #38. He made several other appearances in various titles, but, despite such fans as Don Thompson and myself almost

fanatically praising this super-hero to everyone we talked to, neither Mr. Jigsaw or his creators ever received the acclaim and success they deserved. Now you have a chance to change that for the good.

Here in 2009, we need Charlie Grant — aka Mr. Jigsaw — more than ever. Even in 1983, he was a breath of fresh air in a genre that was growing darker and less friendly by the issue. Charlie is a down-to-earth good neighbor with a big grin, real family values, and a determination to use his amazing powers to help his fellows.

Fortier's stories are simultaneously light-hearted and serious with Kato's lively art bringing them to bouncy life on each black-and-white page. The supporting cast is equally wonderful and includes Charlie's doting parents and beautiful reporter Amy Boucher. More than two decades after their original publication, the three stories in this premiere issue are still fine examples of comics craft and entertainment.

Mr. Jigsaw #1 earns the full five Tonys. The

next two issues will reprint the rest of the hero's published adventures. All-new stories by Fortier and Kato will start with #4. For ordering information, you can e-mail Fortier at *Airship27@comcast.net*.

The Blank Comic Book (About Comics, five for $9.99) is one of the strangest items I've ever reviewed in my decades of reviewing stuff for ***CBG*** and elsewhere. It's an utterly blank slick cover wrapping 24 utterly blank interior newsprint pages. So you're paying about two bucks for an utterly blank comic book, which is a much better deal than those comics that make the mistake of printing wretched stories and art on their pages.

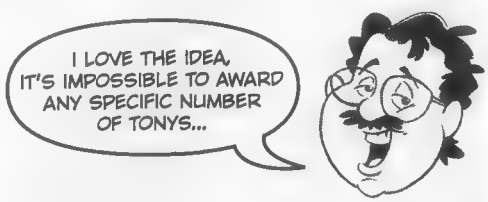
Some kidding aside, this is a clever little item. Publisher Nat Gertler has suggested several uses for it:

"It's fun to draw your own comics in, it's a keen thing to get signed and sketched in at a convention. For the collector who wants to keep lists of information filed in their longboxes, here's a bound set of pages just the right size to fit."

It's impossible to award any specific number of Tonys to this item, since each individual copy will be something different. But I'd love to see what you crazy kids do with them. I'm trying to figure out what to do with mine.

Kudos to Gertler for this keen idea. For ordering information, contact him at *questions@AboutComics.com*.

(Yes, we know it is blank!)



Gripping adventure and wacky situations combine fairly well in ***Maid War Chronicle* Vol. 1** (Del Rey Manga, $10.99) by Ran, artist of *Mao-Chan*. When a medieval kingdom is invaded and conquered by enemies within and without, a small group of palace maids become the protectors of their young prince, the only surviving heir to the throne. Though they appear manifestly unsuited for this task, their surprising courage, ingenuity, and skills serve them well, as do the Twelve Holy Weapons with which they bond.

Clearer storytelling would be a boon to this story, but even with the manga affectations that sometimes make it difficult to figure out exactly what one is seeing, this is fun stuff.

Prince Alex is a lecherous adolescent and a jerk in other ways, too, but he honestly cares for the well-being of the young women he has named "The Order of the Maid." Chief maid Cacao Sardonyx butts heads with Alex frequently and often contemplates abandoning him, but, at her core, she's as loyal as she is feisty. Along with some of the villains, Alex and Cacao are the characters best developed in this first volume, but the other supporting players show promise, as well.

Maid War Chronicle Vol. 1 is rated "OT Ages 16+," probably for sometimes suggestive language and situations and also for the real violence that occurs. I think the material is suitable for younger teens, as well, but that's a call parents will have to make for their children. I found this opening book enjoyable and give it a respectable three out of five Tonys.

www.delreymanga.com

TONY ISABELLA, comics writer and author, has been appearing in ***CBG*** since #3 in 1971. Review items can be sent to 840 Damon Drive, Medina, OH 44258. Check out his website at *www.wfcomics.com/tony*, or e-mail him at *tony@wfcomics.com*!

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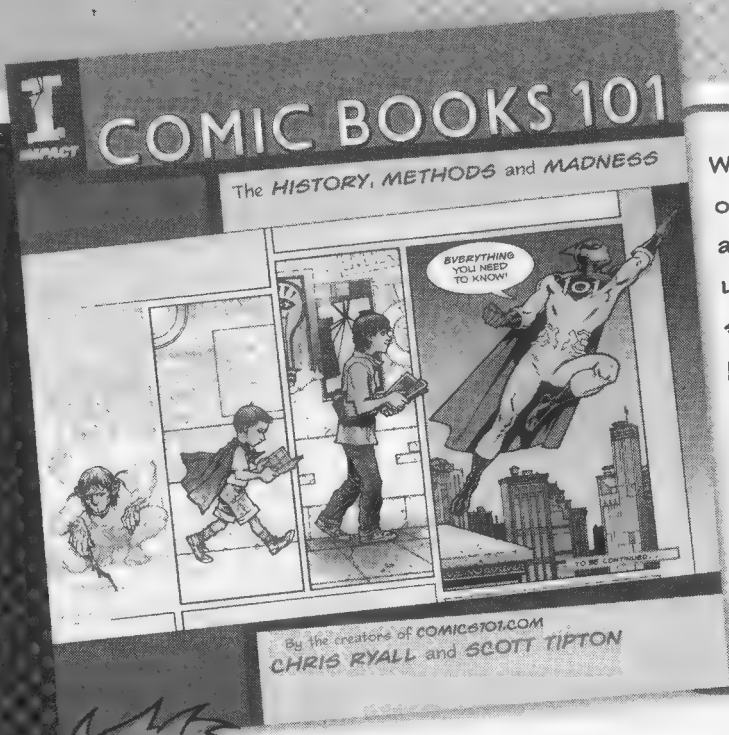
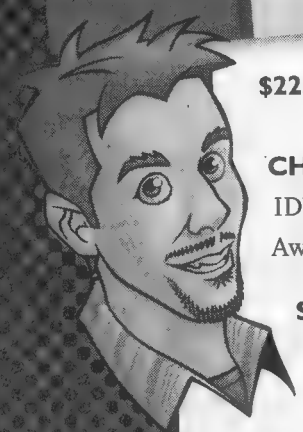


Whether you're an absolute newbie or a loyal collector, this book holds all the answers to the comic-book universe. This complete, definitive and super-cool guide will grant you the power of impressing others with fascinating trivia, back-stories on your favorite comic-book greats and so much more. Discover an inclusive overview of comics from past to present and the super-powered creators behind it all.



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CHRIS RYALL has been the publisher and editor-in-chief of IDW Publishing since 2004 and is an Eagle and Eisner Award-nominated comic-book writer.

SCOTT TIPTON is the founder and editor-in-chief of www.comics101.com, as well as writer of the weekly column by the same name, which is also the site's most popular and highly trafficked feature.

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REVIEWS

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Simpsons Comics #154
Bongo

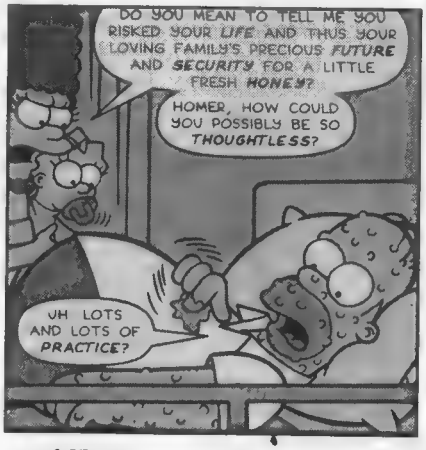
PICK OF THE MONTH COMIC BOOK

$2.99, color, 32 pgs.
Writer: Len Wein; Artists: Phil Ortiz, Mike DeCarlo
reviewed by **Brent Frankenhoff** ★★★★

Nearly every issue of *Simpsons Comics* is outstanding. There is the occasional clunker where the jokes fall flat, but that's not the case with this issue.

Len Wein's "Honey Nut Cheery D'ohs!" begins with Homer swallowing a bee and subsequently discovering that a nest has been established in his home's eaves. The sweet, sweet product leads the entire Simpsons clan to produce their own line of honey, which doesn't sit will with Mr. Burns.

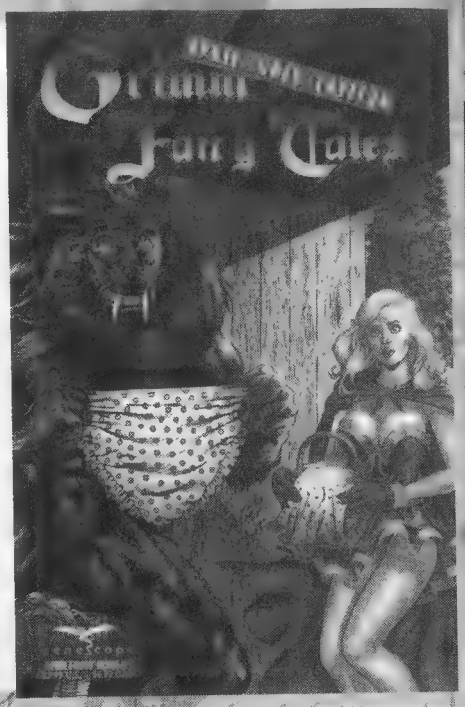
The jokes are fast, furious, and often unexpected, which is the way any good Simpsons story should be. Memorable among them are the list of actors in the movie Homer is sleeping through as the story opens



and Mr. Burns' mixed metaphors.

Many issues of this long-running comics series could easily serve as scripts and storyboards for an animated episode and that is most definitely the case here. The only thing missing (and it's not even noticeable) is an appearance by Spanish-speaking Bee Man, other than on the cover.

Grimm Fairy Tales: April Fools' Day Edition #1
Zenescope
$5.99, color, 45 pgs.
Writers: Ralph Tedesco, Joe Brusha, David Seidman; Artists: Various
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★



Marvel's Assistant Editors' Month, which spoofs its titles, has nothing on Zenescope's *Grimm Fairy Tales: April Fools' Day*, which spoofs the latter company's titles. Zenescope publishes comics that give a dark and different take on classic fairy tales, such as *Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella,* and *Jack and the Beanstalk.*

Here, they put a comedic, often sexual tilt on the classic fairy tales. In the *Little Red Riding Hood* send-up, the heroine is far from innocent. In fact, she's very promiscuous, to say nothing of her grandmother. The expression of the Big Bad Wolf's face on the cover is priceless.

In *Reefer Stiltskin* — a *Rumpelstiltskin* parody — instead of spinning straw into gold, a commoner girl has to sell marijuana. Rumpy spins the weed into gold. In the end, the handsome prince is really gay and the commoner girl — now a princess — repays the little troll by having his love-child. The dialogue in this story is just laugh out loud funny. The other three short stories are good, but the two mentioned here are the best of the bunch. Pretty funny stuff.

www.zenescope.com

Sabrina the Teenage Witch #101
Archie
$2.50, color, 32 pgs.
Writer: Ian Flynn; Artists: Chad Thomas, Jason Amash
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz** ★★

Sabrina ain't what she used to be. In recent years, our favorite teen witch has gone through changes too numerous to count. She has gone from the magical maiden of Riverdale to incarnations inspired by her primetime TV show and later cartoon.

Tweenage, Harry Potteresque, and *manga* phases all came and went, and now Sabrina's name appears in small letters above "Young Salem."

That's right: It's "the adventures of Sabrina's cat, when he was a boy." Sabrina gets one panel, in which Salem says, "Let me tell you a story ..."

The story's not necessarily bad. There's a mischievous young wizard, an enchanted frog, and a quest. There's also an enjoyable, four-armed ogre-looking fellow. But it's not *Sabrina.*

It *is* kid-friendly and it'll probably be of more interest to boys than *Sabrina* was in its *manga* phase.

But if you're an *Archie* purist and the "real look" tales bother you, then stay far away from this, as it resembles the old days of Hilda, Zelda, and Harvey as much as it resembles a Buick.

www.archiecomics.com

Terry Moore's Echo #10-11
Abstract Studio
$3.50 @, b/w, 24 pgs. @
Writer and artist: Terry Moore
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★½

The laudatory reviews continue unabated for this series, and deservedly so. So, for those wanting a change of pace, I'll start with the "complaints." First, as with many a comic book, the page count — a mere 19 — would be better at, say, 80 pages per issue in order to satisfy fans. Also, those who don't like the burden of lots of text likely will feel the story plods along at times.

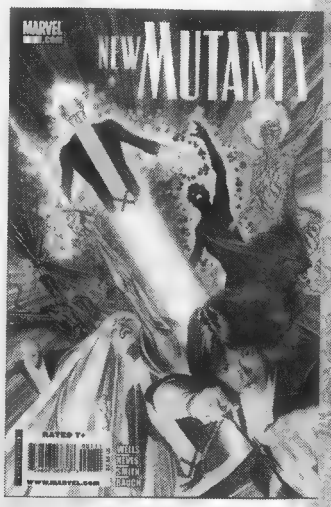
That said, Terry Moore fans know there's a rhyme and reason to his magic, and we don't freakin' complain. The saga of Julie, Dillon, the government agency *du jour,* and those otherwise involved in the story of the liquid, butt-kicking armor that fell from the sky is amazing. Right now, the character that has me most curious is Ivy Raven. Is she a bad guy, a good guy, or a combination of the two? It's never cut-and-dried with Moore and he is a genius at what he does with his comics. His gift of creating complex characters and building human stories from them that readers can relate to puts him among the best of the best of comic-book storytellers past and present.

If *Echo* doesn't intrigue you, then find your pulse. ASAP.

www.abstractstudiocomics.com

New Mutants #1
Marvel

$3.99, color, 40 pgs.
Writer: Zeb Wells; Artists: Diogenes Neves, Cam Smith
reviewed by **Mart Gray** ★★★



After years of alternating between obscurity and the farther reaches of Marvel's mutant line, Charles' Xavier's second X-class is back in its own title. And the selling point is — there isn't one. They're not killing people, they're not played for laughs — when a team has this much chemistry, you don't need a gimmick.

Karma and Dani Moonstar have gone off the radar while calming mutant-fearing locals in Colorado, so Magick, Cannonball, Sunspot, and Magma retrace their steps and find someone very scary. Wells introduces characters and situations, mixes, and stands back.

I especially liked the tension between the New and Newest Mutants. That's due to Magick, who also manages to give the willies to old team-mate Magma in a smart scene.

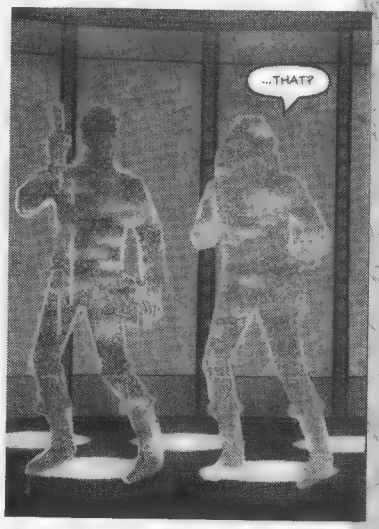
Diogenes Neves gets everyone right, and has a knack for showing what his players are thinking. The only problem concerns the coloring — Sunspot, is shaded as an Anglo-Saxon. Oh, and the revised costumes evoke original X-Factor chic or lack thereof.

This is a confident, fun debut that somehow makes me glad there's another X-book in the world.

www.marvel.com

Star Trek: Crew #2
IDW

$3.99, color, 32 pgs.
Writer and artist: John Byrne
reviewed by **Timothy J. Wood** ★★★



After beaming down to a colony on Tau Alpha III, a team from the U.S.S. Fortune discovers that the colony has been destroyed and they are under attack. Only two members of the team make it back, where they discover that the ship has taken a disastrous hit. It's up to the young ensign who is at the center of this mini-series to make a critical repair to save the remaining crew.

As with most of Byrne's work, the plot is quickly paced and action-filled, with just enough character development to give us tantalizing glimpses into the young woman who will become the character played by Majel Barrett in the original *Star Trek* pilot "The Cage." So tantalizing, in fact, that we want to know more about her. Where did she come from, what experiences shaped her early life, how did she gain the leadership qualities she so boldly exhibits? A little less action and little more exposition would make for a more well-rounded story.

The art, too, is prime Byrne, imbuing the early Federation era setting with just enough detail to make it familiar yet intriguing.

www.idwpublishing.com

Cartoon Flophouse Featuring Greenblatt the Great! #1
Urban Golem Comics

$5, b/w, 48 pgs.
Writer: Michael Aushenker; Artists: Ausenker, José Cabrera
reviewed by **Bernard C. Cormier** ★★★½

Cartoon Flophouse Featuring Greenblatt the Great! #1 collects strips originally produced between 1991 and 2008. (They're not presented in chronological order, by the way.)

The stories involve Greenblatt, a bellhop with a knack for annoying his boss at the Rondovian Hotel. Greenblatt's best friend is Shem, his imaginary pet schnauzer, whom he must "protect" from a nutcase named Van Dyke. Other characters round out the offbeat group, including: Rondovian owner Mr. Sweet, Greenblatt's gay stalker Maurice, and a killer robot bellhop named Greenblatzen.

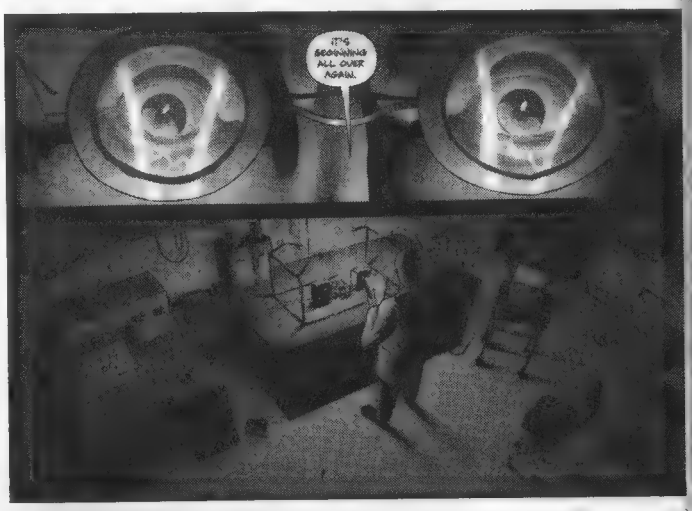
The humor is an homage to the sort appearing between the 1930s and 1950s in different media. Many of the elements in each story, as an example, wink at readers familiar with movie comedies of that era.

Near the center of the magazine is "Cocktails for One," a collection of single gag panels by Aushenker. They may remind readers of a sketchbook approach to old *Playboy* gags.

www.cartoonflophouse.com

Plan 9 from Outer Space Strikes Again! #1
Blue Water Comics

$3.99, color, 32 pgs.; Writers: Darren G. Davis, Chad Helder; Artist: Giovanni Timpano
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★½



Blue Water has cornered the market on cult-related titles: William Shatner, Vincent Price, Ray Harryhausen, *Warlock*, *Leprechaun*, *Missile to the Moon*, and now Blue Water has resurrected the Ed Wood "classic," *Plan 9 from Outer Space*. Of course, you can't corner the market without having some solid effort, and Blue Water continues to showcase that.

One of the more amusing elements of this comic is that they treat it like an Ed Wood movie, although Blue Water's errors and apparent lack of care in the production is completely intentional, unlike the style of the movie director they honor with this book.

The story is one of a thousand that could've been told. It's *tres* campy and reeks of the dead, but in doing so, it's entertaining and worth checking out. Of course, if you dislike the schlock-horror genre, then this one isn't for you. But how many comics readers do enjoy this genre?

That's what I thought.

www.bluewaterprod.com

Warlord #1
DC

$2.99, color, 32 pgs.
Writer: Mike Grell; Artists: Joe Prado, Walden Wong
reviewed by **Michael Tierney** ★★★

Mike Grell returns to write and provide covers for the series that he created back in the mid-Seventies, featuring his interpretation of the various hollow Earth theories, including Edgar Rice Burroughs' concept of Pellucidar. Art is now provided by the team of Joe Prado and Walden Wong.

This issue opens as an archaeological discovery in Tibet leads a team of explorers into confrontation with Chinese soldiers, forcing them to escape through a mysterious portal.

Meanwhile, Travis Morgan wakes from a dream that recaps how he first came to Skartaris, the timeless land inside the Earth. It isn't long before a new mystery calls for Travis to once more wear the mantle of the land's Warlord.

Queen Tara, the Warlord's wife is also back, along with Shakira, the Warlord's cat and constant traveling companion.

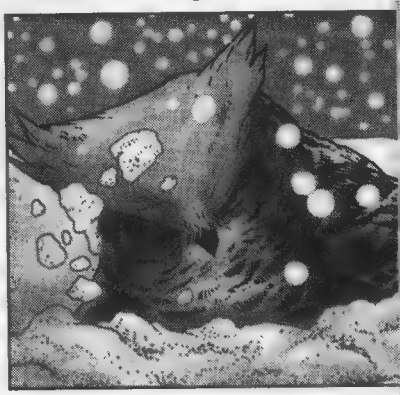
While I'd read the original series, when Grell dropped off the project, so did I. So, I'm not sure if Tara ever realized that the cat her husband sleeps with is actually a warrior woman in disguise.

This should be a fun action adventure ride.

www.dccomics.com

Mouse Guard Winter: 1152 #5
Archaia Studios Press

$3.50, color, 24 pgs.
Writer and artist: David Petersen
reviewed by **Timothy J. Wood** ★★★½



The second Mouse Guard story arc is simpler, yet at the same time more developed than the series' first tale. The previous arc was necessarily complicated by the task of introducing the characters and their world.

"Winter: 1152" focuses the narrative on a few characters engaged in that tried-and-true adventure formula of the journey. Five mouse guards make their way through snowy terrain; they are separated, and three find their way into the ancient subterranean caverns of the weasels, while two others battle a menacing one-eyed owl.

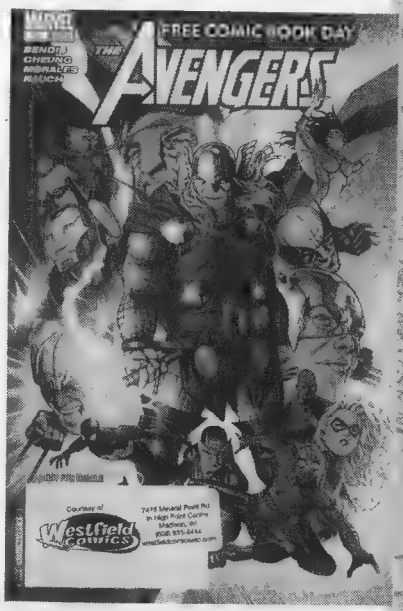
In this issue, Saxon, Sadie, and Kenzie discover that the weasel realm runs dangerous close to Lockhaven, while Lieam and Celanawe engage in a life-or-death struggle with the owl. There is a homecoming and a dire cliffhanger.

As always, Petersen's beautifully rendered art more than serves the story, with page after page of silent panels carrying action, plot, and emotion. The anguish, jealousy, pain, and confusion of the characters is aptly conveyed, often quite subtly. The owl's menacing scowl is chilling. A rare series that has fulfilled its initial promise.

www.aspcomics.com

Free Comic Book Day: Avengers #1
Marvel

Free, color, 32 pgs.; Writer: Brian Michael Bendis; Artists: Jim Cheung, Mark Morales
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★



The Avengers — New and Dark — reluctantly team up to battle Ymir, the über-Frost Giant from the pages of *Thor*. However, since there's bad blood between the real Avengers and Norman Osborn's band of wolves in sheep's clothing, they start fighting each other before putting aside their differences.

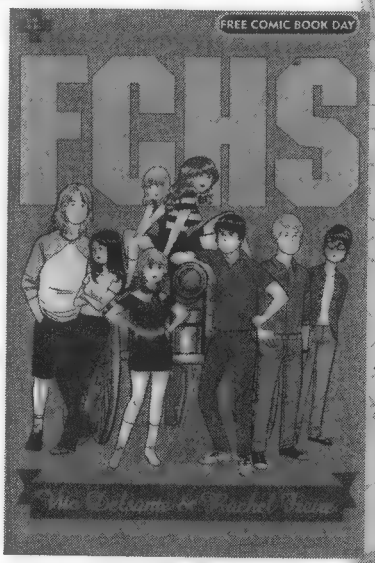
It's hard to say if making Osborn The Iron Patriot (and more like Lex Luthor) is such a good move. To have him lead a team that calls themselves The Avengers must have Steve Rogers turning over in his grave. Crazy and psychotic as Osborn is, he's not stupid; he won't mess with Thor when Thor tells him to let The New Avengers go. It would have been funny if he crossed Thor.

The story is told from Spider-Man's point of view. Brian Michael Bendis has the character's voice down. This is one of Bendis' better entries in the Avengers mythos.

www.marvel.com

FCHS Free Comic Book Day Edition
AdHouse Books

Free, b/w, 32 pgs.; Writers: Vito Delsante, Lamar Abrams; Artists: Rachel Freire, Abrams
reviewed by **Timothy J. Wood** ★★★



The students at Forest City High School seem to fall into the usual cliques — jocks, brains, heads, yet there's just enough nuance to avoid clichés. This installment follows the eight leads on the last day of their junior year, right down to the minute before the final bell.

Things shade a bit too closely to soap opera, but even the brief look we get at each character is enough to understand much more than is presented. The art by newcomer Rachel Freire is sparse but effective. The feature story is supported by excerpts from the online strip that also help flesh out the characters. A full-fledged graphic novel is due out in the fall.

Two stories featuring Max Guy serve as backup. Max Guy is a robot boy who has problems, such as a friend who's made of magma and goes blind every time he cries. Lamar Abrams' character is quirky but lacks anything to distinguish it from the other umpteen similar characters floating around the indy comic universe.

www.adhousebooks.com

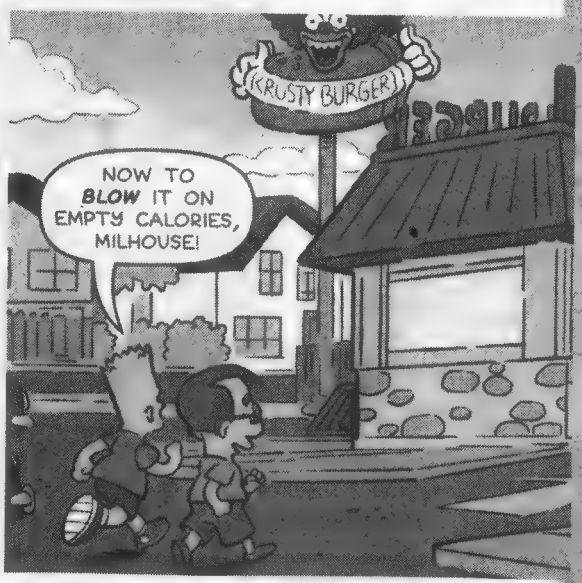
Bongo Comics Free-for-All!
Bongo

Free, color, 32 pgs.
Writers and artists: Various
reviewed by **Timothy J. Wood** ★★★★

The cover featuring Bart in the Android's Dungeon, sitting in a lounge chair, plugged into his iPod reading *Krusty's Playhouse Comics* with Comic Book Guy looming unhappily over him, says a lot about Free Comic Book Day, from both the fan and dealer side. I, at least, observed both attitudes on May 2.

That said, Bongo's offering this year is, as usual, fun, entertaining, and completely irreverent. In "No Such Thing As A Free Comic," Comic Book Guy schemes to procure the last copies of the free *Krusty Burger Comics and Fun Book*, which rests in the greasy hands of Bart and Milhouse. The story-within-a-story, "It's a Burger Eat Burger World!" has the typically penurious clown forcing his Krusty Burger combo characters — Johnny Buns, All-American Fry, Patty Crisp, and Onion Jack — to compete to see who gets the ax.

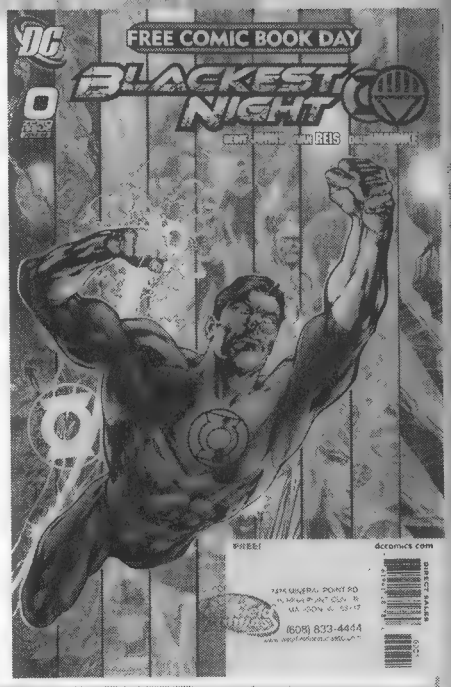
"Captain Cupcake and Pie Boy" and a Futurama story featuring Leela and Amy fill out the issue. As usually, the art hits all the right marks, and the writing is crisp and nimble throughout. As Comic Book Guy would say, "Best free comic book ever."



Free Comic Book Day: Green Lantern — Blackest Night #0

DC

Free, color, 32 pgs.
Writer: Geoff Johns; Artist: Ivan Reis
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★



Geoff Johns is one of those writers who touches everything with respect.

He did that with *Green Lantern: Rebirth*, which restored Hal Jordan to his role as Green Lantern without spitting on a decade's worth of continuity when Kyle Rayner wore the ring.

Here, there's some cool character interactions between Hal and Batman, as well as Hal and Barry (Flash) Allen, a character who recently came back from the dead. Johns makes an interesting point about their respective deaths: Barry died a saint; Hal died a sinner. Additionally, Ivan Reis draws a cool full-page shot of The Flash. He and Johns make a great team.

This story serves as a set-up for July's "Blackest Night," the next GL saga.

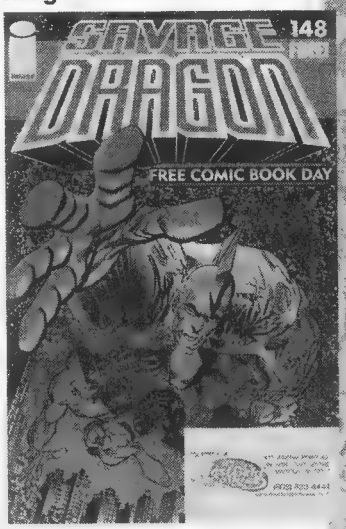
At the end of the book, Johns reassures readers who are suffering from "event fatigue" that this event won't disappoint as he's working closely with the artists and editors. Very classy of him to do that. Additionally, there's DVD-style extras, such as a who's who of characters in the GL mythos.

www.dccomics.com

Free Comic Book Day: Savage Dragon #148

Image

Free, color, 28 pgs.
Writer and artist: Erik Larsen
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★



Give Savage Dragon creator Erik Larsen his props: He knows how to craft a "jumping-on point" story for readers new to *Savage Dragon*. He rehashes the character's origin in four pages (three of which have nine panels) before cutting to the main story, which involves rescuing his two kids who were kidnapped by — well, that would be telling. Read the book.

This issue also features Daredevil, Master of Courage — a character not to be confused with Marvel's Daredevil, The Man Without Fear. But wait, isn't this the same character that's appearing under the name of The Death-Defying Devil in Dynamite Entertainment's *Super Powers* series?

Yes, it is.

However, the rights to this Golden Age character created by Lev Gleason are in the public domain, allowing Larsen and Dynamite to both use him. Which version is the definitive one? "To an extent, they all are," Larsen writes at the end of the issue, where he gives a history of the character in a two-page summary.

All in all, a very fun story. Creators should use this issue as a blueprint for "jumping-on points."

www.imagecomics.com

Hellboy: The Wild Hunt #3-4

Dark Horse

$2.99 @, color, 28 pgs. @
Writer: Mike Mignola; Artist: Duncan Fegredo
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★

The Mike Mignola fans are already on board, so now it's a matter of pulling in the fringe fanbase. I wouldn't call this mini-series an "event," but it's one of the more notable books that doesn't qualify for that distinction.

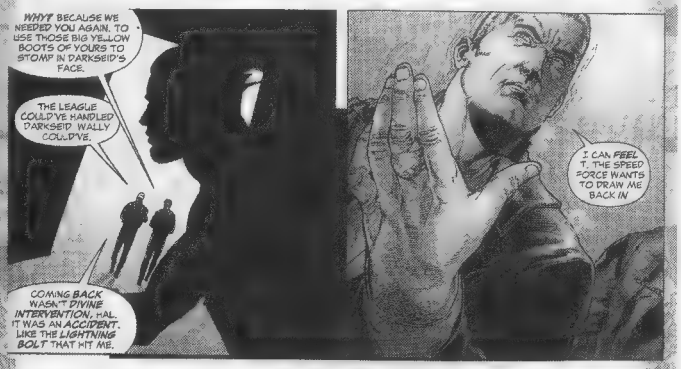
Hellboy, Ireland, death, macabre beings, and darkness abound. Yes, no big surprise. However, to say more would be to spoil. Mignola's writing of the main character remains strong, and Duncan Fegredo's art is a good match for the creator of Hellboy and his compatriots.

Mignola and Fegredo make a solid creative team, and readers will hope they'll stick together long after *Wild Hunt* concludes. Along with the main story are the eerily enjoyable (likely the descriptive term for most Hellboy stories) backup stories. #3 finishes the two-part "How Koshchei Became Deathless" while #4 is "Baba Yaga's Feast." The latter is better than the former, but both are good.

The Hellboy saga continues, these being overall #39-40. Reading earlier installments would greatly help you to understand what's going on, so catch up on those, if you can, before savoring this latest series.

www.darkhorse.com
www.hellboy.com

Flash: Rebirth #1
DC
$3.99, color, 40 pgs.
Writer: Geoff Johns; Artist: Ethan Van Sciver
reviewed by **Mart Gray** ★★★



Barry Allen, shining symbol of the Silver Age, is back from the dead and he's — well, a bit of a misery really. Moping around the Flash Museum, moaning about the "lowlifes" of the Rogues' Gallery, telling Hal Jordan he has no time for welcome back parties. Oh no, he's been dead once and wants to do as much good as possible before Death catches up again. It's possible we'll have several issues of this before Barry has an emotional rebirth to match the physical one.

Meanwhile, Wally is fretting about his kids, Iris is acting like a dimwit ("Barry's back. Bart's back What more do I need to know?" Er, hello, Miss Ace Reporter?), and Bart is suddenly snotty. Then there's the worrisome fact that someone is killing speedsters.

I was looking forward to this book, but while Ethan Van Sciver's pencils and inks make it look gorgeous, Geoff Johns' script, with off-kilter characterization, over the top violence, and, worst of all, retconned tragedy in Barry's childhood, makes this a depressing start.

www.dccomics.com

G.I. Joe: Origins #2
IDW
$3.99, color, 30 pgs.
Writer: Larry Hama; Artist: Mike Hawthorne
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★

With *G.I. Joe* godfather Larry Hama at the helm, IDW has relaunched the Joe franchise. Think of this as *Ultimate G.I. Joe* in a way. Snake-Eyes, the most popular Joe character, lies in bed, his face all bandaged up with Duke and Scarlett standing vigil.

General Hawk is also in this story, talking to Duke. Here, Hawk is drawn as much older and with brown hair instead of with blond hair, probably to distinguish him from Duke, who's also blond. That created some confusion as to who's who in prior incarnations.

Speaking of confusing one character for another, there's machine-gunners Heavy Duty and Roadblock. Heavy Duty plays a strong role in this issue and he's drawn exactly like fan-fave Joe Roadblock. However, it's been stated before that the two are cousins and share a passion for gourmet food, although Roadblock is the better chef.

Like most story arcs in comics today, this is one of those tales that needs to be read in one setting once you have all the parts.

www.idwpublishing.com

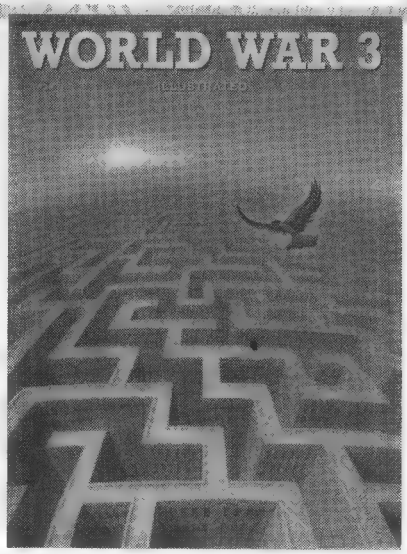
World War 3 Illustrated #39
World War 3 Illustrated Inc./Top Shelf
$5, b/w and color, 121 pgs.
Writers and artists: Various
reviewed by **Bernard C. Cormier** ★★★½

World War 3 Illustrated #39 is a thought-provoking, social activism-inspiring art book in the form of a magazine-sized comic.

For those reasons, it's better than 95% (give or take) of every other comic or graphic novel currently on the market, regardless of format. It doesn't have super-heroes or any other worn-out comic-book clichés — such as words. All its stories are "silent," without words or captions.

With more than 30 stories, it's progressive, entertaining, and not redundant. As expected, some of the stories are better than others.

"Steps of Another Man's House" by Onur Tukel illustrates the cycle of human life from conception to raising a family. Ryan Inzana's "Brooklyn-Fication" uses fantasy to demonstrate how individuality can come under fire in society. Within three pages, Santiago Cohen's "In Security" uses exaggerated symbolism to show how some governments selectively ignore basic human rights in the name of "freedom."



World War 3 Illustrated #39 would make a great addition to any comics collector's collection.

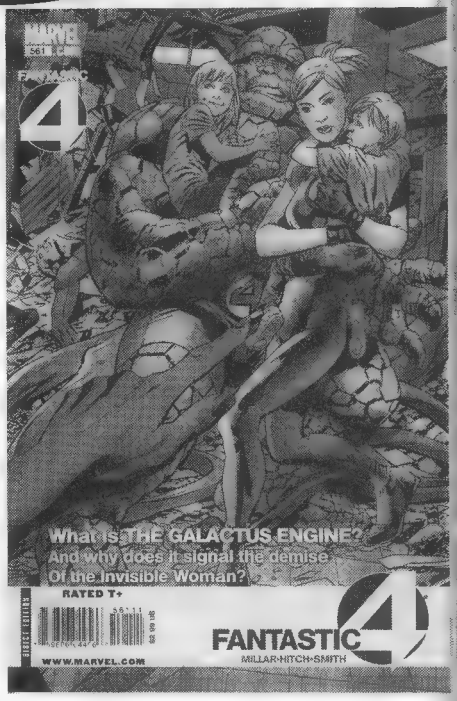
www.worldwar3illustrated.org
www.topshelfcomix.com

Sometimes our reviewers just don't agree!

OBLIGATORY FIGHT SCENE!

Fantastic Four #558-563
Marvel

$2.99 @, color, 32 pgs. @
Writer: Mark Millar; Artists: Bryan Hitch, Andrew Currie, Cam Smith
Discussed by **Jim Johnson and John Petty**



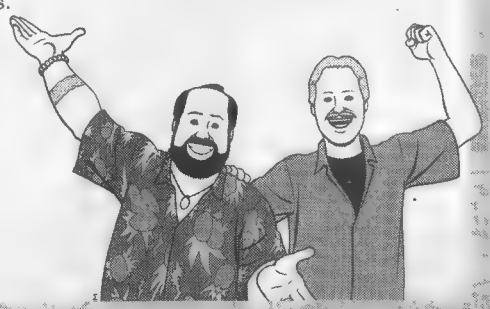
Jim Johnson: Hey Fuzzy, remember when this comic book used to shamelessly proclaim itself "The World's Greatest Comic Magazine"? If there were ever a time it could make that claim again, it's now. Writer Mark Millar's first arc, ironically titled "The World's Greatest," was respectable enough, but this current arc has everything FF fans could want: saving the world, other dimensions, time travel, Doctor Doom, and other familiar-looking characters that are not who readers might first think they are. Millar not only unfolds a fascinating story but remembers to focus on the dynamic that's always made this book work: the characters. Johnny and Ben's respective relationships play an important role, as do both of Reed and Sue's children, not to mention their new nanny, whose role is far deeper than anyone might guess. This is the best this series has been since John Byrne's run during the '80s. So don't even *try* to argue; instead, I'll just fill the rest of the space with some jokes I found on the Internet.

John Petty: Uh-huh. Don't quit your day job, Shecky. I know you have no taste in comics, but this is a new low, even for *you*. Far from being "The World's Greatest Comics Magazine," Millar's run has transformed this into "The World's Greatest Threat to the Continued Existence of Trees." Pointless, rambling storylines coupled with a stream-of-consciousness writing style make this a title to be avoided at all costs. Galactus as a gigantic Duracell? The unnecessary and inconsequential "death" of a character pulled out of thin air? The Thing meeting, falling in love with, and proposing to some strange woman in a matter of issues? My 4-year-old niece tells more coherent stories than this. At least we both agree that John Byrne's run on this title was great; perhaps Marvel should bring him back into the fold. At least then we'd be guaranteed good stories that actually make sense.

Johnson: You know what *doesn't* make sense? You, Herbie. Millar and artist Bryan Hitch have brought that cosmic, larger-than-life feel to this story with a creative spin, something that this title has often lacked since Byrne's run. Hardly pointless or rambling. Reed's never been more heroic. Doom's never been more evil. And what's more cosmically mind-blowing than an artificial version of Earth in another dimension? In a lot of ways, the creators have hit the same mark that Lee and Kirby did; any longtime reader can see that. Perhaps you read this in between those old *Marvel Masterworks* volumes. Face it: This is a modern classic. And it's only getting better.

Petty: Are these more of those Internet jokes you were talking about, because even *you* can't believe the drivel you're spouting? So Doom is at his most evil when sending flowers and spouting about some "Master" that's never been alluded to in nearly 50 years of FF adventures? Go peddle those fish somewhere else, brainless. Hitch's art, which was great on *The Ultimates*, is flat and lifeless here, perfectly matching Millar's vapid, empty storytelling. It's as if they can't wait to get off this sinking ship. Far from hitting the mark that Lee and Kirby established, it's more like neither of them ever read an issue of the series before and have no idea who these characters are. I feel as if the real story is happening off-panel, and we're seeing every tenth page of script; *that's* how much sense this book makes now. Someday, Marvel might decide to start publishing *Fantastic Four* again. At that point, maybe I'll check it out.

www.marvel.com



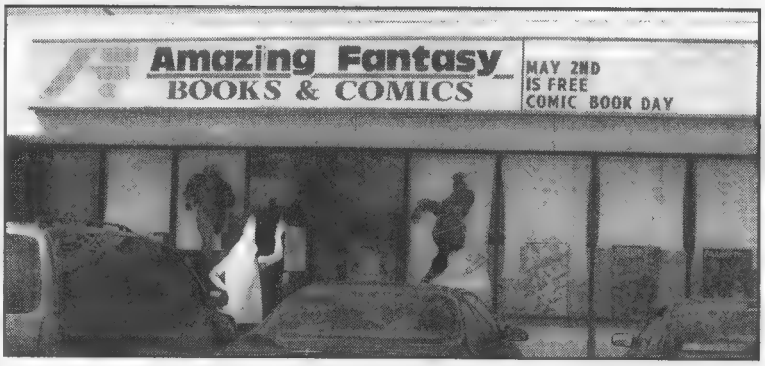
A comics Christmas

Free comics, anyone?

by KAREN O'BRIEN

In embracing the intended spirit of an event, we reinforce its significance. Free Comic Book Day (FCBD) may well be one of the finest examples of this in our hobby. Congratulations and thanks to the shop owners who participated and all of the attendees who brought friends and family members to support their local shops May 2.

Adventures were afoot across the country on the eighth FCBD, and you can read about plenty of them in the forums at *www.CBGXtra.com*. I attended events at two local shops and had a blast, but I also thought it would be fun to follow the exploits of several comics creators on the big day. Thanks to Mark Rudolph, Thom Zahler, and John Jackson Miller, this column covers FCBD events in four states.



FCBD at Amazing Fantasy in Calumet City, Ill., kicked off with a bang. No, make that a banana.

Amazing Fantasy's Frankfurt, Ill., store was filled with patrons all day.

Illinois

My hometown comics shop is Amazing Fantasy Books & Comics in Calumet City, Ill. I was cheerfully greeted by Peter Potassium the Anti-Illiteracy Banana, who served up free hot dogs and directed patrons to the wide selection of free comics available. DJ Joseph Cruz was spinning tunes everyone enjoyed, and the festive atmosphere was complemented by the 20% discount on everything in the store. Back issues were offered at 30% off, and selected books were 50% off list price.

According to one of the store's regulars, "It's cool. Last year, I brought my niece and nephew — they loved it. This year I brought my daughter."

Amazing Fantasy's Frankfurt, Ill., location also hosted a great FCBD event. Patrons were greeted by costumed characters, and the roomy store was stuffed with patrons all day. Some were there for the free comics, of course, but the longest line was to meet artists Skottie Young (*Wizard of Oz*, Marvel) and Christopher Mitten (*Wasteland*, Oni Press). They sketched, signed, and chatted for more than three hours — you bet I brought my sketchbook.

Young commented on several aspects of working on *Wizard of Oz*. "This was Tim Burton before there was Tim Burton," he said of L. Frank Baum's original Oz books. To Young, color demands as much care as pencils and inks. "Color is so important. You want the color to tell the story as much as the rest of the art."

While Christopher Mitten sketched and inked a gorgeous portrait of Michael from *Wasteland*, he allowed me a sneak peek at *Wasteland* #25: the first all-color issue of the series. His sun-bleached cityscapes are at once subtle and striking. You don't want to miss that issue!

Manager Lori Gentile said she loves FCBD. "It's my favorite day of the year for the shop because we get to see so many new faces. Having a few comics artists on hand is always a plus — we had a wonderful turnout for them. I always order extra FCBD comics to give to the local libraries, park districts, and children's hospital — anything to get the word out about comics. This year's selection was very diverse, and I was especially pleased to see *all new* content from the

Skottie Young sketched his characters from the *Wizard of Oz*. The combination of Eric Shanower's words and Young's art has made Oz one of this year's biggest hits.

***Wasteland* artist Christopher Mitten sketched at Amazing Fantasy. He inked this drawing with a brush; note the open inkwell.**

big two: Marvel and DC. The Green Lantern book was the top FCBD book that people requested, but all of them went over very well. We had a great day."

A festive atmosphere permeated the downtown Chicago location of Graham Cracker Comics. Store Manager Matt Streets said he was pleased with the turnout. "From the moment the doors blew open, it was a feeding frenzy! We were just all very happy to be able to provide everyone with such a wide variety of comics — and for free!

According to the store's Shanna Berry, "My favorite moments were the people who didn't know about FCBD and were bombarded with a carnival-like environment. At first glance, Christmas came early! It was wonderful to see the camaraderie among the fans — strangers were comparing selections, giving recommendations — it just felt like a big happy family all day long.

"We tend to have more adults frequent the store, so it was refreshing to look around and see so many young faces excited about reading comics. The kids couldn't wait to bust them open; they sat down and started reading immediately, which gave their parents a chance to really explore the store.

"Our White Violin (Samantha LaFountain) said her favorite story of the day was a little girl in her little flower dress who sweetly demanded, 'I want my comics!' Sam happily donated her personal copy of *Owly* FCBD when she noticed we had run out."

The biggest hits at Graham Crackers among the free comics were *Blackest Night* among the adults and *Owly & Friends* among the kids.

Michigan

Mark Rudolph (*www.cvcomics.com*) enjoyed FCBD at Green Brain Comics in Dearborn, Mich. "My podcast co-host, Jerzy Drozd, and I gave away around 80 copies of *Sugary Serials*, an all-ages anthology with an '80s cartoon aesthetic and more than 40 copies of a six-page mini, *Galactic League of Marshals*. The staff at Green Brain Comics were fantastic hosts. They kept us well fed and hydrated, and it was a really positive experience. By 6 p.m. they estimated 800 people had come through the door. They had prize giveaways every half hour and a nice group of guests: Arvell Jones, Guy Davis, Matt Feazel, Shane Houghton, and Ryan Claytor.

"It was nice to see so many kids at the event, and even the Mayor of Dearborn showed up with the formal proclamation that May 2 was Official Free Comic Book Day in Dearborn."

Wisconsin

John Jackson Miller, writer of Dark Horse's *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic*, reminded me of FCBD's origin in a story ("The Power of Free") for *Comics & Games Retailer* #113 (Aug 01) by Joe Field, owner of Flying Colors Comics in California. Field, who originally proposed the idea of a comics giveaway day, saw FCBD's potential, "A promotion like this could be the calling card we need to give our market strong forward momentum." And so it did.

Miller spent FCBD 2009 at Galaxy Comics & More in Stevens Point, Wis., signing books and delving deep into the timeline of *Star Wars*.

John Jackson Miller of *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic* at Galaxy Comics and More in Stevens Point, Wisconsin

Texas

Artist Thom Zahler said he loves FCBD: "Working in comics is hard. It's not *ditch-digging* hard, but there are still long nights, lots of studio solitude, the work of getting work, and pains of that sort. But Free Comic Book Day: That's one of the days when it feels worth it. I've heard it called 'Geek Christmas,' and that's not far from the truth. It's the one universal day of the year where you get to escape into the sunlight and see the people who enjoy your work ... and hopefully find some new ones.

"I was at Rogue's Gallery Comics and Games in Austin, Texas, a guest of the estimable Randy Lander. It was a wonderful time — just the right amount of people without being overwhelming.

The Red Lantern (Megan Byrd) and the White Violin (Samantha LaFountain) of Graham Crackers Comics in downtown Chicago display the store's wide selection of FCBD comics.

There were a few other creators signing there including Alan J. Porter (*Carst*), Paul Benjamin (*Pantheon High*), and Aqua Leung Guy (*Aqua Leung*). Randy took good care of us. It's the closest I'll get to being a rock star or Rick Castle. I was, of course, horrified to find those hated red M&Ms in my bowl, but I'm willing to overlook such things.

"I'm already looking forward to next year."

So am I!

Graham Crackers Comics in downtown Chicago was filled with patrons enjoying FCBD.

Free comics and foam Worverine claws make for a great FCBD!

KAREN O'BRIEN may be reached via e-mail at: *obrien500xl@gmail.com*. Send review copies to P.O. Box 41, Dyer, IN 46311

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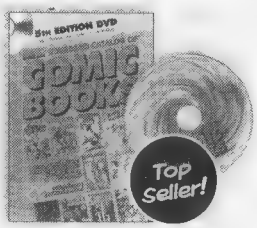

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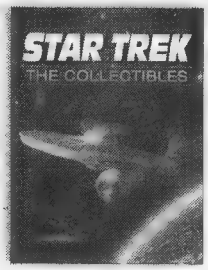

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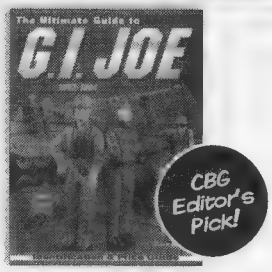

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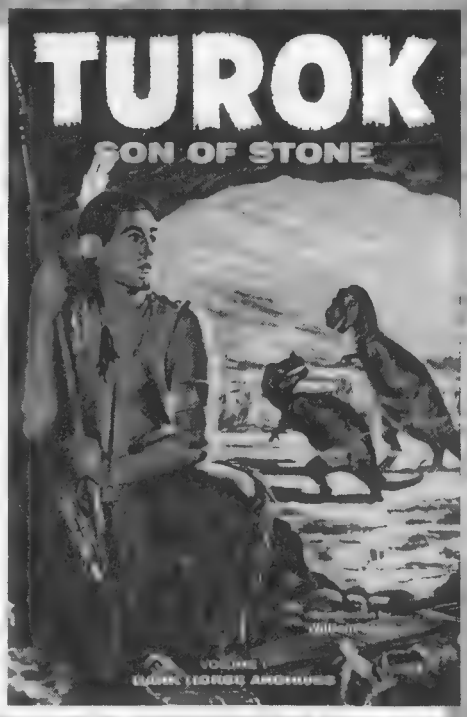
TRADE PAPERBACK AND GRAPHIC NOVEL REVIEWS

Reviewed in this section:

American Dream: Beyond Courage
The Avenger Vol. 1
Dead Men's Boots
The Death of Captain America Vol. 3: The Man Who Bought America
D.I.Y. Dentistry
Enemies and Allies
Filthy Rich
Gambit Classic Vol. 1
Graphic Classics: Oscar Wilde
Grimm Fairy Tales Vol. 4
The Illustrated Jack the Ripper
James Bond 007: Polestar
Little Nothings: The Prisoner Syndrome
Norman Saunders
Nova Vol. 2
Rasl Vol. 1
Spider-Girl Vol. 10: Season of the Serpent
Superman and the Legion of Super-Heroes
Supermen!
Teenagers from the Future
Tokyo Nights, Bangkok Nights
Turok Son of Stone Vol. 1
Was Superman a Spy?

PICK OF THE MONTH TPB

Turok Son of Stone Vol. 1
Dark Horse
$49.95, color, 224 pgs.
Writer: Gaylord Du Bois; Artists: Various
reviewed by **Michael Tierney** ★★★★



Turok, Son of Stone was a "man versus nature" concept that was pure in its simplicity: A pair of pre-Columbian Indians stumble through the Carlsbad caverns and become trapped in a series of lost valleys filled with prehistoric creatures.

With flesh-hungry monsters stalking their every step, Turok and his nephew, Andar, befriend primitive tribes and discover a secret poison for their arrow tips, giving them a fighting chance against the parade of predators from every age of the Earth.

Presented here are the first six issues, with the original covers and color intact. The interiors are a lot brighter when printed on glossy paper, as opposed to the original ink-absorbing pulp, but it works well with the many pages of cave interiors, showing details not originally evident.

The cover from Turok's first appearance in *Four Color* #596 does feature outdated T. rex interpretations, but modern readers need not be concerned. The art would evolve along with archaeological discoveries made during the three decades that this series ran.

Despite recent attempts to modernize Turok, the original vision remains the best.

www.darkhorse.com

Grimm Fairy Tales Vol. 4
Zenescope

$15.99, color, 168 pgs.; Writers: Raven Gregory, Ralph Tedesco, Joe Tyler; Artists: Gregory, Mark Dos Santos
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★

Rapunzel, Snow White, Snow White and Rose Red, The Sorcerer's Apprentice, and *The Boy Who Cried Wolf* are the fairy tales that get the twisted and dark Zenescope treatment in this volume. Sorceresses Sela and Belinda square off in a final battle. Through the use of a magic book, they can show people via fairy tales the paths that their lives can take. In the evil Belinda's case, she twists and manipulates them, much to Sela's consternation. Hence the battle.

The best story in the bunch is where a professor sexually harasses a cute co-ed, who is powerless to stop him until Sela gives her. *The Sorcerer's Apprentice.* To say anything else would ruin this tale's ending.

The art — done by several artists — is good stuff. Snow White appears in a variation of her costume found in the 1937 Disney classic, albeit she's very curvaceous. The artists' styles complement each other, rather than work against one another. That's always a positive thing, something the bigger companies need to take note of.

Reprints *Grimm Fairy Tales* #19-24

www.zenescope.com

Tokyo Days, Bangkok Nights
DC/Vertigo

$19.99, color, 190 pgs.
Writer: Jonathan Vankin; Artists: Various
reviewed by **Bernard C. Cormier** ★★★

Since the same person wrote both mini-series, DC has decided to reprint *Vertigo Pop! Tokyo* #1-4 (2002) and *Vertigo Pop! Bangkok* #1-4 (2003) in the same book. For simplicity's sake, let's identify the two halves as "Tokyo" and "Bangkok."

In "Tokyo," an American working in Japan becomes involved in rescuing a rock star from the mob with an obsessed teenage fan. It's a humorous story seemingly written to make people chuckle.

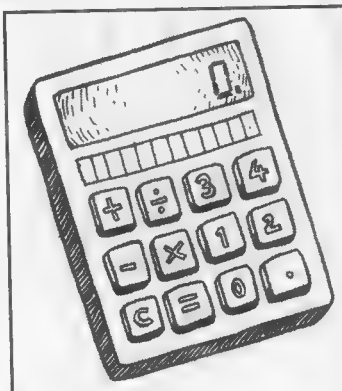
On the other hand, "Bangkok" is another story about accidental involvement but takes a more serious approach. It's about a couple vacationing in Thailand who, with the help of a transsexual kick-boxer, a British pedophile, and others, assist a woman in attempting to rescue her teen sister from the sex trade. They also attempt to rescue an elephant.

Although it's more thought-provoking than "Tokyo," "Bangkok" squeezes humor in between its shadowy and morally ambiguous characters. Of the two stories, "Bangkok" is the better, but "Tokyo" isn't a write-off. It's simply less serious and, as a result, outshone.

www.vertigocomics.com
ISBN: 978-1-4012-2189-8

D.I.Y. Dentistry ... and Other Alarming Inventions
Plume

$11, b/w, 98 pgs.; Writer and artist: Andy Riley
reviewed by **Brent Frankenhoff** ★★★



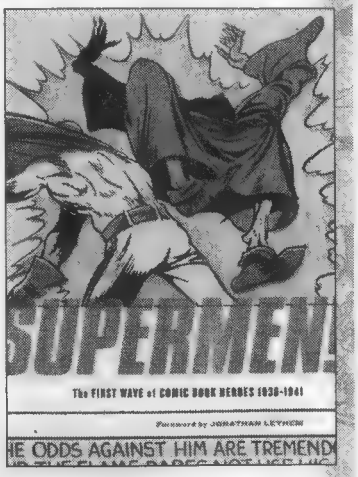
Andy Riley is channeling at least some of Gary Larson's *Far Side* spirit in this thin collection of cartoons. The bizarre humor and off-the-wall contraptions are definitely inspired by Larson's work.

The example shown is among the subtle, non-threatening ideas. Others in the collection feature violent ends for such transgressors as moped thieves. More than likely, those were inspired by a personal incident and the cartoon worked as a cathartic release. Haven't we all considered vile punishments for line blockers, litterbugs, and other "miscreants" whose sole purpose seems to be to annoy the rest of us?

While this slim book can be seen as a possible cure for those suffering from *Far Side* withdrawal, the $11 price tag seems high for less than 100 pages.

www.penguin.com
ISBN: 978-0-452-29003-7

Supermen!
Fantagraphics
$24.99, color, 192 pgs.
Writers and artists: Various
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz** ★★★½



This book was originally promoted as containing the one-and-only appearance of Will Eisner's Wonder Man, from *Wonder Comics* #1. It doesn't, presumably for legal reasons, which is incredibly disappointing. The lack of it should raise enough ire to put one off the book altogether, but the rest of the collection is so remarkable, it's hard not to love it.

Supermen! is subtitled *The First Wave of Comic Book Heroes 1936-1941*, and so it is. Despite the title and the notable omission, they're not all Superman or Wonder Man types. There are space men and magicians in there, alongside the long-underwear types, and the mystery men have that wonderful Golden Age moral ambiguity.

Familiar names abound, both in characters (Dr. Mystic, The Shield, Daredevil, *etc.*) and creators (Siegel and Shuster, Bill Everett, Simon and Kirby, Jack Cole, and more). Fletcher Hanks' wonderfully weird creations, Stardust and Fantomah, appear, as do tales by Gardner Fox with art by Fred Guardineer, Ogden Whitney, and others.

Simply put, it's an indispensable collection. But they *do* owe us Wonder Man!

www.fantagraphics.com
ISBN 978-1-56097-971-5

Filthy Rich
DC/Vertigo Crime
$19.99, b/w, 200 pgs., available in August
Writer: Brian Azzarello; Artist: Victor Santos
reviewed by **Brent Frankenhoff** ★★★½

DC expands its Vertigo imprint later this summer with the introduction of Vertigo Crime, a series of one-shot graphic novels featuring characters both familiar (John Constantine) and unfamiliar to the Vertigo audience.

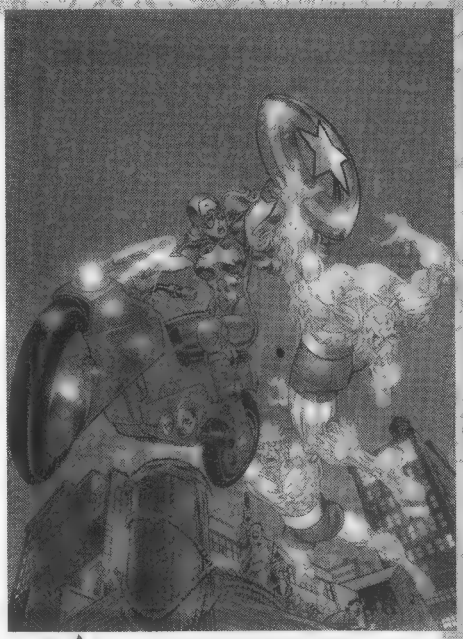
Set in the 1950s, *Filthy Rich* features Richard "Junk" Junkin, a promising pro football prospect whose career was cut short by injuries and a gambling problem. Junkin's athletic promise continues to serve him well as he goes to work for an auto dealership which moves cars just by having him on the lot. Shortly, the dealership's owner, Herb Soeffeer, hires him to keep an eye on his wayward daughter and Junkin quickly learns that there's more to daddy's little girl than there appears.

Writer Brian Azzarello has produced a tight crime noir story here that fans of his work on *100 Bullets* will relish. *Sin City* fans will also enjoy the noirish story with Victor Santos' art adding just the right mix of shadows to the story.

This is a great start to the line and readers would be well-served to let their retailer know to reserve additional hardcovers as they're released.

www.dccomics.com

American Dream: Beyond Courage
Marvel
$13.99, color, 120 pgs.
Writer: Tom DeFalco; Artists: Todd Nauck, Scott Koblish
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★



MC2 universe creator and writer Tom DeFalco takes legacy hero American Dream (the leader of that reality's Avengers), a few steps beyond being a female version of Captain America in this collection. He fleshes out her character, tells her origin (she's the niece of Cap's girlfriend, Agent Sharon Carter), gives her boyfriend problems (she's dating fellow Avenger Thunderstrike), and has her battle The Red Queen and Ion Man.

Todd Nauck's art is top-notch; his visuals leap off the page. Inker Scott Koblish does a good job embellishing Nauck's pencils; they make a good team. Old-school artist Ron Frenz — DeFalco's longtime collaborator on *Thor, Amazing Spider-Man* and *Spider-Girl* — provides the cover.

The negative about this collection is that there's so much *more* of the MC2 universe to explore besides Spider-Girl, especially since DeFalco is the sole writer. It would be great to see more of these characters. Then, again, Spider-Girl fans have used their collective voice to save her from cancellation several times; they just need to do so again to see more American Dream and other MC2 characters.

Reprints *American Dream* #1-5
www.marvel.com
ISBN: 978-0785131847

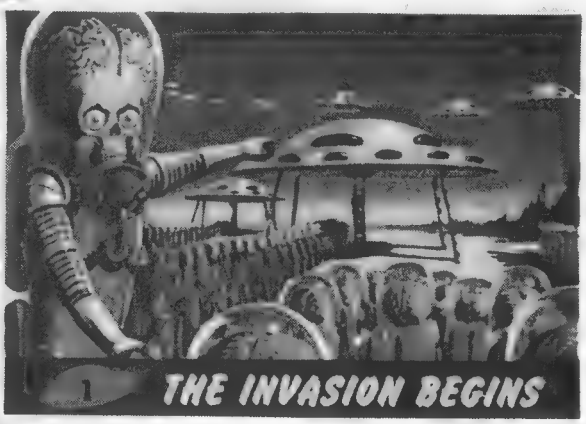
Norman Saunders
The Illustrated Press

$39.95, color, 368 pgs.
Writer: David Saunders; Artist: Norman Saunders
reviewed by **Michael Tierney** ★★★½

I never realized how familiar I was with the work of Norman Saunders until this artbook.

It was Saunders who painted the controversial series of *Mars Attacks!* trading cards. The entire set is here, plus close-ups, along with Saunder's other card work on *Battle, Ugly Stickers, Wacky Packages, Batman, Superman* and others card and button sets.

Saunders tackled other controversial material, painting covers for men's exploitation magazines, which continued the type of colorful covers that he'd created for pulp magazines both before and after the war.

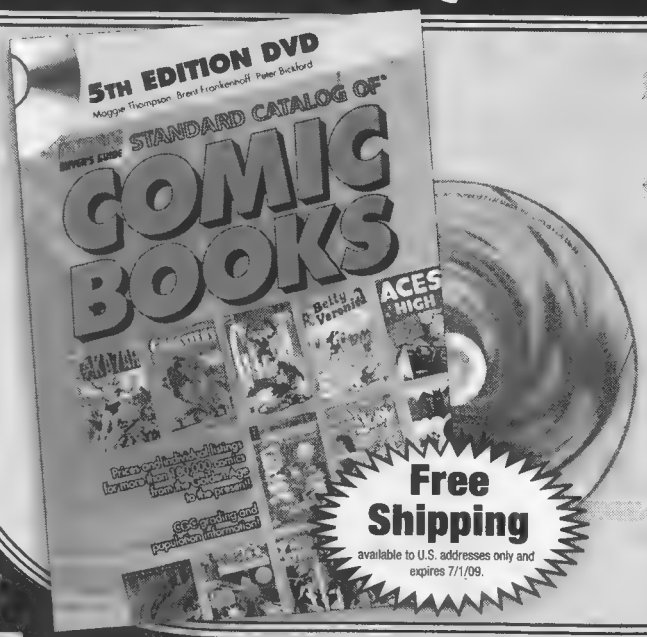


The studio-refined quality of his paintings helped Saunders cross over to slick magazines, writing and illustrating his own travelogues. While his artistic style never exaggerated, his content did. Saunders was a master at generating energetic images which took accepted content to the commercial limit, and made for a long career. Created by Norman's son, David Saunders, this collection of the artist's life's work is clearly a labor of love. The pages are packed, with no wasted space.

This is one of the best "bang for your buck" artbooks that I've seen.

www.theillustratedpress.com
ISBN: 978-0-9820041-0-4

Finally! It's Here...



by Maggie Thompson, Brent Frankenhoff, Peter Bickford

Some things are worth the wait, including the fifth edition of *Comics Buyer's Guide Standard Catalog of Comic Books* – now on DVD! This sleek and slimmed down version of the original mammoth-size reference contains all the details, pricing and comic book covers (now in COLOR) that you would expect from the super-sized book, in an easy-to-use DVD-ROM for your PC or Mac.

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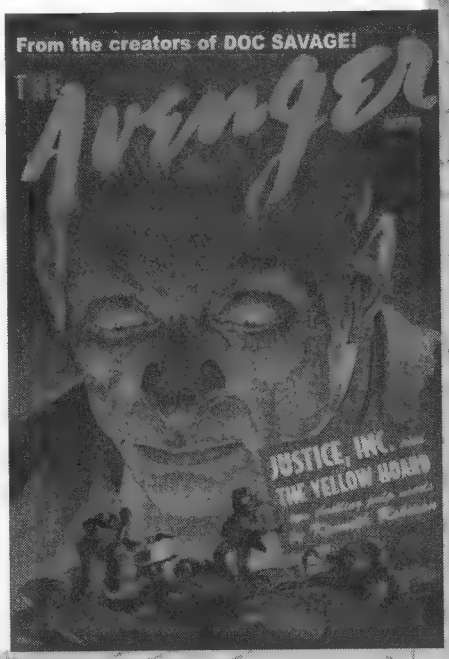
The Avenger #1: "Justice, Inc." & "The Yellow Hoard"

Sanctum Books

$12.95, b/w, 128 pgs.

Writer: Paul Ernst (as Kenneth Robeson); Artist: Paul Orban

reviewed by **Brent Frankenhoff** ★★★½



For nearly three years now, Anthony Tollin has been producing reprints of Doc Savage and Shadow pulp stories via his Sanctum Books imprint. Now, he expands the line with the first two Avenger stories with The Whisperer waiting in the wings.

Fans of Doc Savage will recognize the Kenneth Robeson name and aficionados of both Doc and The Shadow will easily see the elements that publishers Street & Smith borrowed from their two popular franchises to create The Avenger in 1939.

The story of adventurer Richard Benson, transformed into a force against evil via a tragic turn of events that claimed the life of his wife and young daughter, may not be as familiar, but it serves well to drive the first story forward. Paul Ernst (writing under the Robeson house name) maintains continuity through the early adventures with Benson's promise to establish a headquarters in the first story coming to fruition in the second.

For fans who read the Bantam reprints in the 1970s, not only will memories be revived, but there are extras to be discovered here. It's a great start.

www.shadowsanctum.com

ISBN-13: 978-0-9822033-0-9
ISBN-10: 0-9822033-0-6

Rasl Vol. 1: The Drift

Cartoon Books

$13, b/w, 112 pgs.

Writer and artist: Jeff Smith

reviewed by **Bernard C. Cormier** ★★★

Collecting the first three issues of the series, *Rasl Vol. 1: The Drift* serves as Jeff Smith's post-*Bone* sequential creative outlet. This time, he's not aiming for elementary-school kids. In a story intended for older readers, Smith cleverly plays with the science-fiction concepts of parallel universes and time travel.

Rasl is an art thief who steals from parallel Earths. Such a task is accomplished with special gear enabling him to enter "The Drift," a sort of inter-dimensional wormhole hyperspace. However, his greed for art has blinded him to the fact that his trips are disorganized because of his lack of planning. He'll never really know if he ever returned to his true "reality." To make matters worse, a mysteriously ugly person dressed in black appears to be chasing him through the various dimensions with intent to kill.

This interesting story appears to have begun before its first page. What has gone before will likely be explained as the series develops further.

www.boneville.com

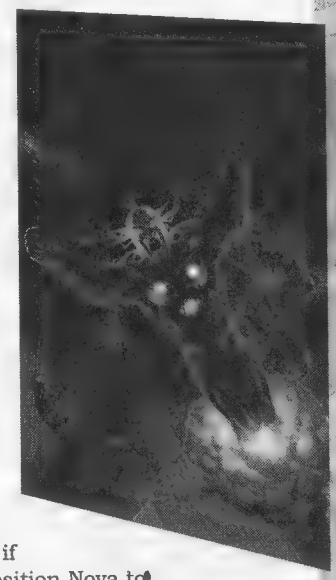
ISBN: 978-1-888963-20-5

Nova Vol. 2: Knowhere

Marvel

$16.99, color, 160 pgs.; Writers: Dan Abnett, Andy Lanning; Artist: Wellington Alves

reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★



Props go to writers Dan Abnett and Andy Lanning for taking Nova in new and exciting directions, making the character sell after the two short-lived series in the 1990s, and making readers forgive them for *Force Works*. Putting Nova in space is a great idea after the character's last two series in the 1990s rehashed his original 1970s series.

In this volume, Nova battles The Phalanx and rekindles his romance with Gamora. He ends up in Knowhere, a city built in the severed head of a long-dead Celestial. It's if the writers were trying to position Nova to rival The Silver Surfer (another great character who deserves another shot at a monthly series) as Marvel's premier space hero. They just might, considering how intergalactic they're making his adventures, yet not forgetting his roots on Earth by retelling his origin from *Nova* (Vol. 1) #1 and modernizing it.

These may be the best Nova stories since the early days of the original *New Warriors* series, which was a sleeper in the early 1990s.

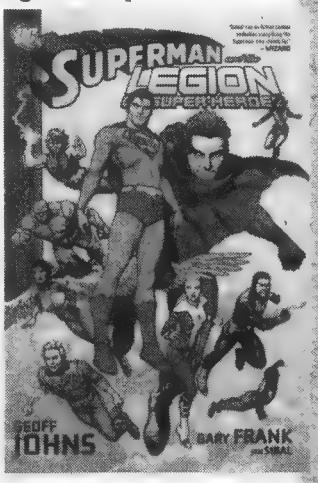
Reprints *Nova* (Vol. 4) #8-12, Annual #1

www.marvel.com

ISBN: 0785126325

Superman and the Legion of Super-Heroes
DC

$24.99, color, 144 pgs.
Writer: Geoff Johns; Artist: Gary Frank
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★½



The legend of Superman is what inspired The Legion of Super-Heroes to band together. Here, his legend is tearing apart The Legion and The United Planets, as several rejected, disgruntled Legion applicants from Earth form The Justice League of Earth. They're so xenophobic, they rewrite Superman's history, stating he was an Earthling instead of a Kryptonian. As a result, all aliens are banned from Earth, which is seceding from The United Planets. Galactic war is coming.

This looks like a job for Superman!

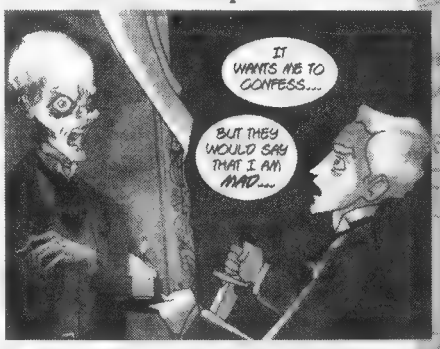
Desperate, The Legion brings Superman to the 31st century to stop these madmen. To up the ante, the sun is red, rendering Supes powerless. Gary Frank draws Superman with the likeness of the late, lamented Christopher Reeve, who is the definitive Superman for many. Geoff Johns shows just how optimistic and inspiring Superman is. All the traits the character stands for jumps out on every page. You can almost hear the John Williams music in the background. Johns and Frank are a writer-artist team that does right by creators Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster.

Reprints: *Action Comics* #858-863.

www.dccomics.com
ISBN: 978-1401218195

Graphic Classics: Oscar Wilde
Eureka Productions

$11.95, b/w, 144 pgs.
Writer: Oscar Wilde; Artists: Various
reviewed by **Bernard C. Cormier** ★★½



As with the other entries in the series, Eureka's *Graphic Classics: Oscar Wilde* adapts a selection of work by the featured author (in this case Wilde) into sequential art.

The stories adapted for the book are: "The Picture of Dorian Gray," "The Canterville Ghost," "Lord Arthur Savile's Crime," and "Salomé."

They're all acceptably good in ways that would prompt people unfamiliar with Wilde's writings to search for more of them.

However, two of the four are better than the others:

"The Picture of Dorian Gray" is about a rich and shallow model. He sells his soul to remain as physically young as in a painting done of him. As others age, his body stays young but not his likeness. Now, the painting reflects how evil he has become.

In "Lord Arthur Savile's Crime", the aforementioned Lord Savile has the misfortune of getting his palms read. After being told that he will murder a distant relative, he tries to decide whom he'll kill.

Graphic Classics: Oscar Wilde is certainly a fine book for any comic collector interested in Wilde's work. Wilde would be proud!

www.graphicclassics.com
ISBN: 978-0-9787919-6-4

The Illustrated Jack the Ripper
Transfuzion Comics

$8.99, b/w, 55 pgs.
Writer: Gary Reed; Artists: Mark Bloodworth, Gustav Dore
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★

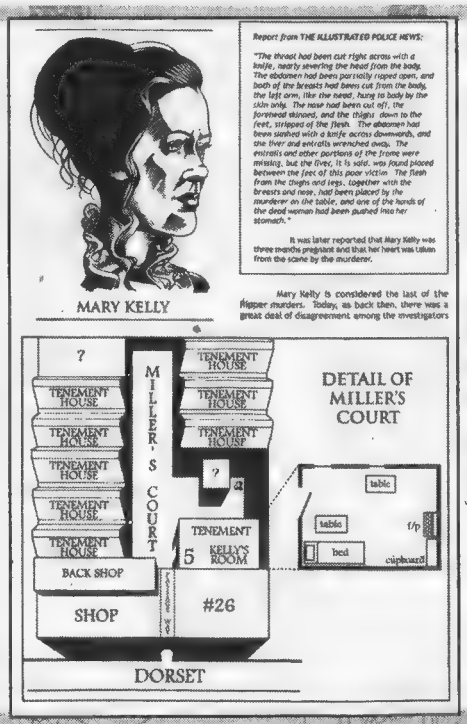
Think of this as *Jack the Ripper for Dummies* or *The Idiot's Guide to Jack the Ripper* — only with more information. There is so much written on history's most infamous serial killer — a lot of which is speculation — that it becomes overwhelming.

Not so with this graphic novel. Gary Reed, Mark Bloodworth, and Gustav Dore break down the Jack the Ripper case into digestible bits, offering illustrated reenactments of the murders, detailed dossiers of the victims and suspects, maps of Victorian London, and Jack's letters to the police that are printed verbatim.

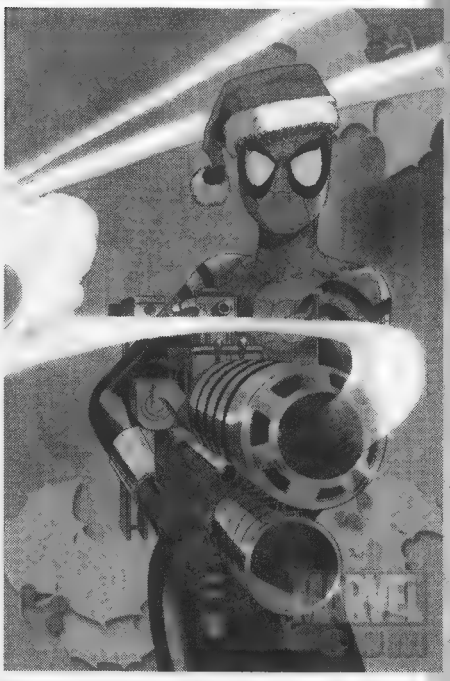
Despite the digestibility of this graphic novel, it is not light reading — fair enough warning.

To Reed's credit, he does not try to identify the murderer; that's for the reader to decide and draw his or her own conclusion. He does state, however, that if Jack the Ripper's identity is ever revealed, the mystique surrounding this case would cease to be so fascinating. Good point.

www.transfuzion.biz
ISBN: 978-0-941613-08-8



Spider-Girl Vol. 10: Season of the Serpent
Marvel
$9.99, color, 192 pgs.
Writers: Tom DeFalco, Ron Frenz; Artists: Frenz, Pat Oliffe, Sal Buscema
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★



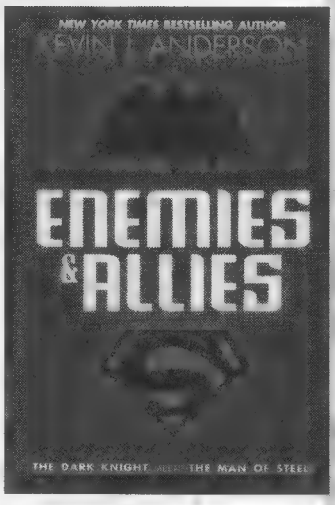
It's Spider-Girl vs. Seth the Serpent God of Death, as Mary Jane gives birth to her second child, Benjamin. Seth was a major villain when Tom DeFalco and Ron Frenz chronicled *Thor* and *Thunderstrike*. Here, Frenz draws Seth differently, which is a mistake; he looks less menacing. It's hard to believe that Spider-Girl — in a dramatic splash page — changes the tide of her battle with Seth by kicking him between the legs. Nonetheless, it epitomizes her unbreakable spirit.

She also battles an evil, alternate Peter Parker. The way those pages are drawn is a tribute to the late Ross Andru's art on *Amazing Spider-Man* #149, where Spidey fought his clone in what would inspire the "Clone Saga" 20 years later. This series can't seem to get away from that dreaded clone.

The best story is a Done in One tale told from classmate Meagyn Brady's point of view. An outcast whose mother is despondent after the death of her father, Meg's invisible to everyone in the school. Even after she helps Spider-Girl stop a villain, she's still invisible to everyone in a sad and all-too-familiar tale.

Reprints *Spider-Girl* #52-59
www.marvel.com
ISBN: 978-0785132134

Enemies & Allies
Wm. Morrow
$26.99, 326 pgs.
Writer: Kevin Anderson
reviewed by **Brent Frankenhoff** ★★★



Following up on his *Last Days of Krypton* novel, writer Kevin Anderson takes the next step in chronicling the adventures of The Man of Steel.

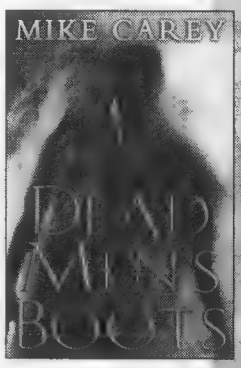
This time, Anderson focuses on both Superman and Batman, showing the pair's divergent crime-fighting styles and mutual distrust of each other until circumstances force them to work together to stop a world-threatening menace precipitated by Lex Luthor's Machiavellian schemes.

Fans of Darwyn Cooke's *New Frontier* will enjoy this as will almost any Silver Age fan, as long as they can reconcile themselves to the divergence from comic-book continuity.

Where Anderson's previous book in this series bogged down, there's no slow patches in this adventure, just a couple of instances where The Man of Steel doesn't use his head and makes some wild assumptions about The Caped Crusader. But the little touches for both Clark and Bruce are what make this book shine.

www.harpercollins.com
ISBN: 978-0-06-166255-3

Dead Men's Boots
Grand Central Publishing
$25.99, 420 pgs.; Writer: Mike Carey
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★½



This third installment in Mike Carey's Felix Castor series takes readers deeper into the past of the freelance exorcist and supernatural detective, even as it takes the protagonist out of bonny England across the pond to the United States. This new tale is a continuation both in the overall story and the quality of the prior two Castor novels. *Dead Men's Boots* delightfully offers much more of the milieu and rules of Castor's world, expanding on what already has been a superb and absorbing world to be sucked into.

As a renowned comics writer on *Lucifer* and *Hellblazer*, among other titles, it's no surprise that Carey knows the darkly supernatural so well. Perhaps his most honed talent is developing intriguing characters and weaving stories that are so complex yet are easily understood. Carey's style embraces horror, humor, and depth of storytelling like few authors today. While some may lament that there are still questions at book's end, that simply means there's more to look forward to in the fourth book and later installments.

Fans of supernatural, horror, or urban fantasy literature would be remiss to not read this series. Fans of the Castor novels will be happy to see that, on top of the expansion in characters and stomping grounds in *Dead Men's Boots*, Carey also keeps a keen focus on the regulars and the larger questions in Castor's life, such as Rafi, Nicky, Juliet, and the haunting atmosphere of London.

www.hgbusa.com
ISBN: 978-0-446-58032-8

Little Nothings: The Prisoner Syndrome
NBM

$14.95, color, 128 pgs.
Writer and artist: Lewis Trondheim
reviewed by **Bernard C. Cormier** ★★½

Originally published in France as *Les Petits Riens 2: Le Syndrome du Prisonnier* by Éditions Delcourt's Shampooing imprint in 2007, *Little Nothings: The Prisoner Syndrome* is a sequential blog formatted and edited for book presentation. That's right: Its contents were originally used by Trondheim in a blog titled *Les Petits Riens* (The Little Nothings).

The blog factor in its production history explains the existence of two noticeable elements within the book.

First, the reason for using an autobiographical narrative is clear, once its blog origins are known. Bloggers often like to write about themselves; Trondheim is no exception. From cover to cover, "Bird-Trondheim" (everyone within the work is an animal) deals with the ups and downs of the graphic-novel industry as seen from his perspective.

Second, all of the pages of this graphic novel can be enjoyed, either alone or in concert with the others, because, since they were originally blog entries, they all have their own punch lines.

www.nbmpublishing.com
ISBN: 978-1-56163-548-1

Gambit Classic Vol. 1
Marvel

$24.99, color, 184 pgs.
Writers and artists: Various
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★

It used to be a prerequisite for an X-Man to have a mystery-shrouded past. Gambit — created by Chris Claremont and Jim Lee — was second to Wolverine, but his past isn't as convoluted.

Although his official debut was in *Uncanny X-Men* #266 (reprinted here), his first cameo appearance occurred in *Uncanny X-Men* Annual #14 (*not* reprinted here). While that annual took place chronologically after #266, it was published prior to #266. It and subsequent issues of *Uncanny X-Men* and *X-Men* by Lee, Claremont and Scott Lobdell should have been included in this volume — especially in *X-Men*'s case, where Gambit's real name and some of his origin were revealed. That is the backbone of his first mini-series (reprinted here).

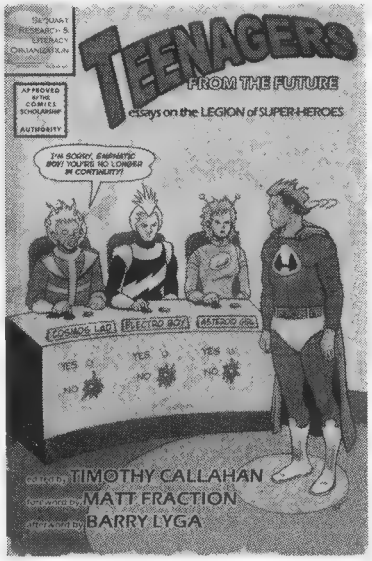
So far, Gambit has had two ongoing series and several mini-series. Let's hope his appearance in the *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* movie and this book's sales can warrant a third ongoing series, provided that it's done right. Gambit is a character who's capable of carrying a book but he's never been given a fair shake, due to creative team changes and such.

Reprints: *Uncanny X-Men* #265-267, *Gambit* (Vol. 1) #1-4.

www.marvel.com
ISBN: 0785137297

Teenagers from the Future: Essays on the Legion of Super-Heroes
Sequart Research & Literacy Organization

$26.95, b/w, 338 pgs.
Writers: Various; Editor: Timothy Callahan
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz** ★★★½



What an exciting collection of essays on America's favorite team of super-powered 31st century teens! The gamut of The Legion's rich history and continuity is explored here. Future fashions? Diversity? Architecture? Pseudo-science? They're all in here, plus more.

Launched in the late 1950s, The Legion bridged the gap between the Golden Age Justice Society and the Silver Age Justice League. Have you ever considered how The Legion helped the dynamics of the super-team evolve? That's in here. So is a sociological examination of "generational theory" and how The Legion may represent particular cycles. (That essay quotes Legion writer Mark Waid's obvious question, "Who in their right mind would entrust the security of Earth ... to teenagers?")

The book spans the creative history of The Legion, from then-teen writer Jim Shooter, through Paul Levitz and Keith Giffen, to the aforementioned Waid. So, whether one's interests lie in The Legion's capricious constitution, tying Amethyst's Gemworld to The Legion's Sorcerers' World, or discussing whether Shooter "Marvelized" DC through The Legion, the serious aficionado is bound to find his topic here.

www.sequart.org
ISBN 978-0-615-20322-5

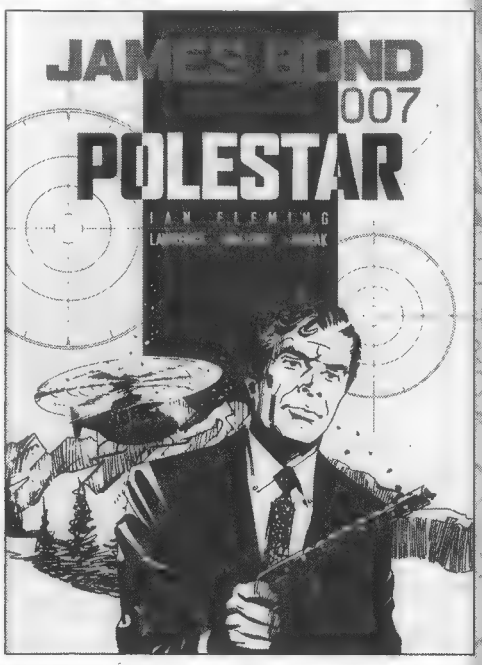
James Bond 007: Polestar

Titan

$19.95, b/w, 120 pgs.

Writer: Jim Lawrence; Artists: John McLusky, Yaroslav Horak

reviewed by **Bernard C. Cormier** ★★★



Collecting the final five storylines of the long-running *James Bond* UK comic strip, *James Bond 007: Polestar* delivers what readers should expect from such a book.

As an example: Because European newspaper comic strips are easy-going when it comes to what's considered acceptable content, it's not surprising that there's nudity in all five stories. That may surprise some people reading this, especially if they live in North America, where it's unlikely that many newspapers would run such 20-year-old strips in modern times.

Other than that surprise, the stories have the usual 007 action and nutcase villains with wickedly expensive plans for world domination.

The book also contains bonus articles of interest to James Bond fans including "A View to Thrill" about "Goldeneye," 007 creator Ian Fleming's Jamaican house.

The article most related to comics is "From A to Zig Zag: Adventures in Chile" by Johnny Oreskov. It's an overview of Chilean James Bond comics published by Zig Zag during the '60s and '70s.

www.titanbooks.com

ISBN: 9781845767174

Captain America — The Death of Captain America Vol. 3: The Man Who Bought America

Marvel

$19.99, color, 160 pgs.

Writer: Ed Brubaker; Artists: Various

reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★½

As we stand on the brink of economic Armageddon, Ed Brubaker makes Captain America relevant and popular for a 21st century audience the way Steve Englehart did during the Vietnam-Watergate era. That's impressive.

What's also impressive is how Brubaker resurrected Bucky (one of the better resurrections in comics) in a believable way. Not only did he make Bucky Cap upon Steve Rogers' death, he gave him personality: no mean feat. Some of the best Cap stories occur when Rogers is no longer Cap (Englehart, Mark Gruenwald, and Mark Waid did it), but his legacy is there — something Brubaker plays up.

"The Death of Captain America" story wraps up with an action-packed finale that doesn't falter, featuring Black Widow, Sharon Carter, Tony Stark, Clint Barton, and The Falcon (another Cap character who's come a long way). If you're not reading this title, you're missing out. It is far and away one of Marvel's best titles today, earning high praise from *Entertainment Weekly* and *Rolling Stone*.

Reprints *Captain America* (Vol. 5) #37-42

www.marvel.com

ISBN: 978-0785129707

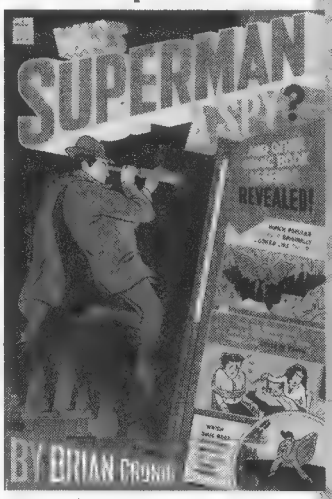
Was Superman a Spy?

Plume

$14, b/w, 244 pgs.

Writer: Brian Cronin; Cover artist: Mickey Duzyj

reviewed by **Brent Frankenhoff** ★★★½



Brian Cronin's "Comic Book Legends Revealed" column, which appears as part of "Comics Should Be Good" on Comic Book Resources.com is a guilty pleasure of many. Cronin's research into the numerous myths, anecdotes, and outright tall tales of the industry is almost impeccable and he seems to have unprecedented access to many of the folks involved with those selfsame urban legends.

Before you think that this volume is nothing but a reprinting of the online column, think again. Cronin has produced dozens of new stories and wrote elsewhere that it was tough putting the book together as he had to achieve a balance among the legends. He couldn't have a dozen Spider-Man stories to one Fantastic Four story for example.

The mix works here, although more stories from publishers other than Marvel and DC would have been a bonus. Those other companies get pretty short shrift as the book concludes with a section of approximately half the size of each of those devoted to the Big Two.

Cover artist Mickey Duzyj deserves a special nod for the well-designed front and back covers.

www.penguin.com

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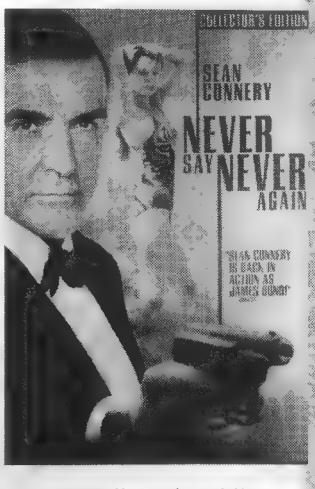
Never Say Never Again Collector's Edition

20th Century Fox Home Entertainment

$19.98, 134 mins. (plus extras)

reviewed by **Brent Frankenhoff** ★★½



While certainly not a highlight of the Bond franchise, *Never Say Never Again* is on a par with any of the later Roger Moore efforts and represents Sean Connery's last outing as 007.

It had been a dozen years since Connery's previous Bond film, *Diamonds Are Forever*, but time barely seems to have caught up to the actor, who was in his early 50s at the time of filming. The action is toned down from Connery's earlier Bond films, but there's still plenty here as well as the obligatory romance sequences.

Due to legal wranglings over the rights to *Thunderball*, the film is based only on the Ian Fleming novel, which Fleming had based on work he had co-written with Kevin McClory. Much of that legal mumbo-jumbo is covered in the DVD's extras, along with a number of fun anecdotes about the filming and the writing of the movie.

However, the extras needed more editing, since some of the comments are unnecessary and serve to make director Irvin Kershner look bitter about the project and some of the talent associated with it. And don't look for Connery in any of the extras. Apparently, he really did say, "Never again," after this project.

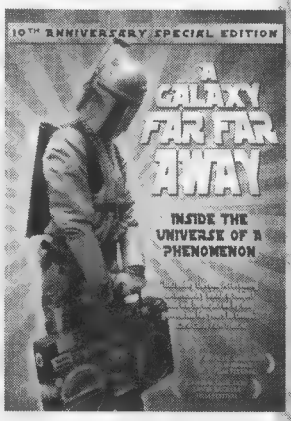
www.foxhome.com

A Galaxy Far, Far Away: 10th Anniversary Special Edition

Cinevolve Studios

$19.95, 80 mins. (plus extras)

reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★½



In 1999, embracing a level of geekhood that outgeeks 99% of *Star Wars* geeks, director Tariq Jalil decided to make a documentary in the wake of the pop-culture craze preceding *The Phantom Menace*. Though not a die-hard fan himself, Jalil captured: fans waiting in ticket lines for six weeks; artists and others who built their lives and careers around the *Star Wars* (say it again) phenomenon; and gobs of fanatics' frenzied midnight forays into toy stores for action-figure releases.

While they served a clear purpose for the film's PR, celebrities also made it into the film, interviewed by Jalil and his crew, including Roger Corman, Joe Pesci, Meat Loaf, and *SW* alums Prowse, Daniels, Mayhew, Baker, and Jackson. These tend to be the less-interesting parts of the movie, though the footage of diehard *SW* fans getting into it with Jimmy Kimmel is hilarious.

While this isn't the most absorbing movie, nor is it even compulsory viewing for *Star Wars* fans, it is a funny and insightful 80 minutes about the effect George Lucas' *magnum opus* has had on fanboy culture. Those who consider themselves *Star Wars* fans should watch it, and those who can put down *Force Unleashed* for an hour and a half to watch it, should.

www.cinevolvestudios.com

ISBN: 1-60663-002-4

Wolverine and the X-Men: Heroes Return Trilogy

Lionsgate

$14.98, 68 mins. (plus extras)

reviewed by **Brent Frankenhoff** ★★★½

Collecting the first few episodes of the Nicktoons series, *Wolverine and the X-Men: Heroes Return Trilogy* has the show off to a promising start.

After an attack on Xavier's mansion leaves The X-Men without their longtime leader, the remaining members of the group go their separate ways. A year later, after receiving a vision of the future, Wolverine endeavors to reassemble the team.

As with other Lionsgate projects, the characterizations here are solid and spot-on. The interactions are believable and the action is top-notch.

This latest iteration of an animated X-Men series is reminiscent of the early 1990s show that ran on Saturday mornings on Fox. (Two DVD volumes of those episodes were recently released. See my review on *www.cbgxtra.com*.)

On the other hand, the angst over the fate of Professor X and the fate of the other mutants is laid on extra-thick and may turn off casual viewers. Enough with the "Professor?" flashbacks from Wolverine.

We got it, the mansion was attacked, Xavier has disappeared, and Wolverine is now in charge. Move on to fresh adventures.

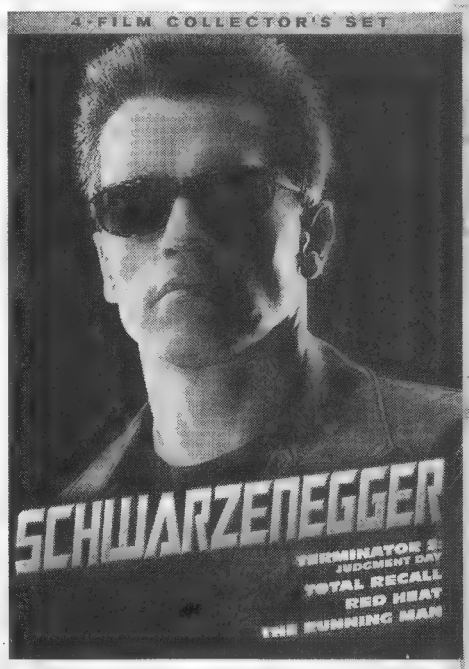
Additional episodes or a preview of same would have been a bonus for viewers.

www.lionsgatedvd.com

Schwarzenegger 4-Film Collector's Set: Terminator 2: Judgment Day, Total Recall, Red Heat, The Running Man

Lionsgate/Republic Pictures/Studio Canal

$29.98, 472 mins. (plus extras, lots and lots of extras)
reviewed by **Brent Frankenhoff** ★★★★



If you've been waiting for a bargain price before picking up four of Arnold Schwarzenegger's better films, you're probably not going to get a better opportunity than this. A little shopping around should net this already bargain-priced set at an even better price, each film costing around $6.

But that's beside the point. It seems like overkill to describe each of the films, but when have the characters played by Schwarzenegger ever shown restraint? So here goes:

Terminator 2: Judgment Day was an outstanding sequel to James Cameron's 1984 *Terminator*. This time, with advances in computer effects, audiences were immediately struck by the latest model of the unstoppable killing machine as it faced off with Schwarzenegger's unit (which was now the hero, rather than the villain). This is still the standout of the franchise, although *Terminator: Salvation* may reinvigorate what has become moribund.

Based on a Philip K. Dick short story, ***Total Recall*** was stuck in development hell for more than 15 years before Schwarzenegger helped free the rights and put together a film about the colonization of Mars. It works well until the climatic scenes when laughable makeup effects seriously challenge the audience's suspension of disbelief.

Red Heat could have been a "fish out of water" story for Schwarzenegger as a Russian police officer in pursuit of a Soviet drug dealer who has fled to Chicago, but it comes off as a thrilling police story with elements of *Beverly Hills Cop* thrown in.

Following the events of Sept. 11 and the preponderance of reality shows in recent years, ***The Running Man*** has new relevance for audiences today, with its views on a society fed all its information and entertainment via television. Based on a Richard Bachman (aka Stephen King) story, the movie holds up after 20 years, as do the other offerings in this set.

The extras are worth watching thanks to the insights they provide.

www.lionsgatedvd.com

The Review Crew

JACK ABRAMOWITZ
Jack has been collecting comics for 30 years and writing about them for 10.
Review copies to P.O. Box 1147, New York, NY 10274-1147.

OLIVER CHIN
Oliver is a freelance media consultant.
Review copies to 535 Rockdale, San Francisco, CA 94127.

BERNARD C. CORMIER
Bernard is a broadcaster and member of the Professional Writers Association of Canada.
E-mail: bernardccormier-gncb@hotmail.com

BRENT FRANKENHOFF
As ***CBG***'s editor, Brent rides herd on these reviewers, and writes a review or two himself.
Review copies to: 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54945.

MART GRAY
Mart is a comics fan and reviewer from the United Kingdom.
E-mail Mart at: martingray1@gmail.com

JIM JOHNSON
Jim has been a fan of all types of comics for longer than he cares to admit.
E-mail Jim at: JimsReview@Yahoo.com.

KURT ANTHONY KRUG
Kurt is a freelance reporter and reviewer.
E-mail Kurt at: kurt513@core.com.

JOHN PETTY
A long-time comics fan, John is also a freelance reporter and reviewer.
Review copies to 1304 Parma Dr. Lewisville, TX 75077.

RAY SIDMAN
Ray is a freelance writer and reviewer.
Review copies to: P.O. Box 6, Iola, WI 54945

MICHAEL TIERNEY
Michael is a retailer from Little Rock, Arkansas.
E-mail Michael at: cbsrock@swbell.net.

ANDREW WAHL
Andrew is a freelance writer and reviewer.
Review copies to: Off the Wahl Productions, P.O.B. 180, Waterville, WA 98858

BRETT WEISS
The author of *Classic Home Video Games 1972-1984*, Brett is a former comics retailer.
Review copies to 6537 Moonglow Ln., Watauga, TX 76148.

TIMOTHY J. WOOD
Timothy is a writer and journalist who lives on Cape Cod, Mass. He has written two books.
Review copies to: 8 Nonatum Ln., Chatham, MA 02633

Harvey's flirtations

The Phantom and Flash Gordon

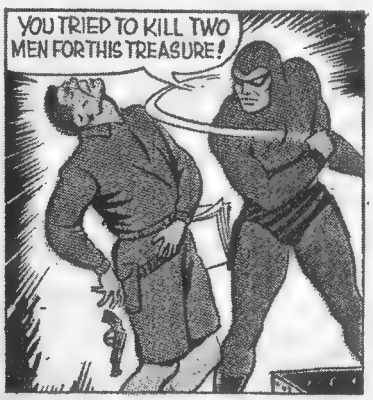
by MICHELLE NOLAN

Eight of the strangest comic books on the stands a half-century ago were the eight appearances of The Phantom in *Harvey Hits*. I remember them well, because they sure puzzled me, starting when I, at age 9, picked up *Harvey Hits* #1 (Sep 57). Who *was* The Phantom? I had never heard of this jungle epic about The Ghost Who Walks! Jungle Jim, yes. Bomba the Jungle Boy, yes. Sheena the Jungle Girl, yes. Even Ramar of the Jungle, the ultimate potted-palm good guy. But The Phantom? Today, the Phantom remains iconic, but in 1950s comic books, he had become a footnote at best.

In retrospect, it wasn't surprising that Harvey would try publishing The Phantom, although 1957 was the nadir for costumed heroes in comics, other than DC's famed characters. After all, Harvey had used The Phantom in *Harvey Comics Hits* #51 (Oct 51) — the first issue of the title's 12-issue run — and again in #56 (Apr 52). Harvey billed the two issues as "Weird Jungle Fantasy" at the top of the covers to take advantage of the growing trend toward horror themes by numerous publishers.

As we mentioned last issue, Harvey acquired the rights to several King Features Syndicate strips when the David McKay Company stopped publishing comics in 1949. One of these was *The Phantom*, which appeared in six McKay Feature Books from 1941 to 1949 and in *Ace Comics* from #11 (Feb 38) through #151 (Nov 49) along with *King Comics* #61 (May 41) through #147 (Aug 48) (except #118) and the short-lived *Future Comics* #1 (Jun 40) through #4 (Sep 40).

However, Standard Comics picked up *King Comics* for the final four issues, #156 (Spr 50) through #159 (Win 51) and even used *Phantom* reprints, so Harvey had to wait to use the character when Standard surrendered the rights. Harvey apparently felt none of the seven newspaper characters in *Harvey Hits* — The Phantom, Mandrake, Invisible Scarlet O'Neil, Rip Kirby, Steve Canyon, Tim Tyler,



Harvey Comics Hits #51 Oct 1951 ★★★

Writer: Lee Falk
Pencils: Uncredited
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Uncredited

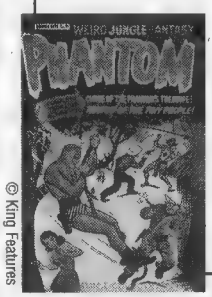
"Curse of the Phantom's Treasure!" • 16 pp.

Scheming crooks steal the Phantom's Treasure, the reward for the winner of the Jungle Olympics with such unusual events as the crocodile swim.

The Phantom himself doesn't play a major role in a clever story of how greed leads the four crooks to kill each other.

"The Terror of the Tiny People!" • 15 pp.

"The Story behind the Phantom" • 1 text pp.



Best CGC copy: 7.5

Then 10c NOW $120

Harvey Comics Hits #56 Apr 1952 ★★½

Writer: Lee Falk
Pencils: Uncredited
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Uncredited

"Dragon-God of Death" • 16 pp.

The Phantom, with Diana's help, survives a plot by Nazi agents to convince the natives that a fiery dragon exists.

This plot provides no surprises, but Diana reaches heroic heights.

"Curse of the Killer-Beasts!" • 16 pp.

Best CGC copy: 9.4

Then 10c NOW $100

© King Features

and Mary Worth — were worth continued publication in 1952, when *Harvey Comics Hits* ended. However, #60-62, featuring the likes of Casper and Baby Huey, were right up Harvey's humor alley and actually became part of ongoing series: *Harvey Hits* #60 and #62 were the first two issues of *Paramount Animated Comics*, and #61 is actually *Casper* #6. (Harvey picked up the rights from St. John, which published the first five *Casper* issues.)

In the 1957-1961 period, though, there was nothing on the stands like these eight Phantom issues through #48 (Sep 61), other than some primitive Iger Shop reprints in the final Ajax issues of 1957-58 from that tiny company. Indeed, after Harvey abandoned everything but humor in the 1959-61 period except for the final issues of *Dick Tracy* and *Joe Palooka*, the company had only one other non-humor character in any of its comics: The Phantom. None of these Phantom stories were original, of course, and they all seemed incredibly dated, at least when I originally read them.

That doesn't mean they aren't good. Several of them are solid, and they could all be followed logically enough by readers of all ages. They just stood out as, well, different from anything else in comics. I've always wondered why Harvey — which by 1959 had chosen to focus almost entirely on humor — decided to publish The Phantom eight times in the otherwise all-humor *Harvey Hits*. Indeed, *Harvey Hits* #26 (Nov 59), the fifth Phantom appearance, was the only non-humor Harvey in 1959 except for the long-running commitment to *Dick Tracy* and *Joe Palooka*. Very, very strange! Even more odd: From 1957 to 1961, other than in his syndicated newspaper strip, The Phantom was nowhere to be found in American culture, even though he emerged as a national hero of Australia.

Unlike Dell's reprint policy, Harvey did not indicate in the indicias of the two *Harvey Comics Hits* and the eight *Harvey Hits* what years these *Phantom* strips originally ran. Harvey did, however, several times publish The Phantom's origin, along with a text feature about the strip beginning on Feb. 17, 1936. The Phantom was not yet well enough known to crack the first genuine history of modern comic strips, Martin Sheridan's *Comics and Their Creators* in 1942, but there was a bit about the strip in Colton Waugh's *The Comics* in 1947.

As the Harvey essay on The Phantom's origin put it, "It was just about that time (Feb. 17, 1936) that the element of fantasy had been introduced into comics, and the idea of the super-human hero with super-normal powers had been born. And that was where The Phantom's extraordinary appeal lay; for

None of these Phantom stories were original, of course, and they all seemed incredibly dated, at least when I originally read them.

Harvey Hits #1 — Sep 1957 — ★★★

Writer: Lee Falk
Pencils: Uncredited
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Uncredited

"The Magic of the Little White Goddess" • 18 pp.

Princess Valerie, the granddaughter of the White Rajah of Volara, needs The Phantom's help to survive all sorts of perils.

You have to root for this adorable child, even though you know nothing bad will happen to her.

Untitled Shin the Jungle Girl story • 5 pp.

"Factless Facts" • 1 text pg.

"Drums" • 1 text pg.

Best CGC copy: 9.0

Then 10c NOW $165

Harvey Hits #5 — Feb 1958 — ★★★

Writer: Lee Falk
Pencils: Uncredited
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Uncredited

"The Curse of the Sunken Treasure" • 18 pp.

A crook in jail for 40 years — with a scar created by The Phantom's ring — teams up with the son he has never seen.

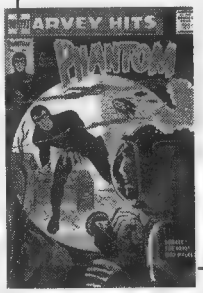
The obvious but still welcome twist is the way the crooked son comes to bear the same scar on his face, courtesy of The Phantom's punch.

"The Confession" • 1 text pg.

"The Mirror of Life" • 1 text pg.

"Masterpiece" • 2 pp.

"Fact Fillers" • 2 pp.



Best CGC copy: 4.0

Then 10c NOW $115

Harvey Hits #12 — Aug 1958 — ★★★

Writer: Lee Falk
Pencils: Uncredited
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Uncredited

"The Mystery of the Scarlet Sorceress" • 19 pp.

Princess Valerie and the White Rajah return in a hair-raising story of how The Phantom rescues The Scarlet Sorceress.

We all know the Scarlet Sorceress can't *really* have four arms, but it's fun to see how The Phantom rescues Princess Valerie and her.

"The Story behind The Phantom" • 1 text pg.

"Collision" • 1 text pg.

"Fact Fillers" • 2 pp.

"How Death Valley Got Its Name" • 1 pg.

Best CGC copy: 8.5

Then 10c NOW $100

Harvey Hits #15 — Dec 1958 — ★★½

Writer: Lee Falk
Pencils: Uncredited
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Uncredited

"Vengeance of the Lake God" • 22 pp.

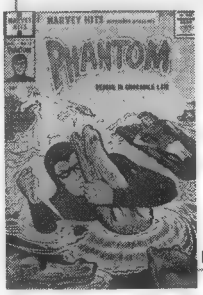
The Phantom's great white stallion, Hero, and his wolf, Devil, play key roles to defeat the evil Trader Smith.

An ordinary story is spiced by The Phantom's animals, not to mention the heroism of Diana.

"Guns Speak Loudly" • 1 text pg.

"Intrigue in the Bering Sea" • 1 text pg.

"Meet The Phantom" • 1 pg.



Best CGC copy: 8.0

Then 10c NOW $100

© King Features

What Baby Boomer doesn't remember Spoonmen plugging the delicious "spoon-sized Shredded Wheat"?

The Phantom was a superb human, not a super-human! That element of believability alone would account for his success!" Since the first commercial publication of Superman was more than two years in the future when The Phantom made his debut, one has to say whoever wrote this had a bad memory. Not to mention a couple of sentences later, when the writer wrote, "in the middle 1930s ... millions of innocent people were being inhumanely slaughtered all over Europe by the robot armies of Hitler and Mussolini." Again, the writer jumped the historic gun, notwithstanding the Spanish Civil War.

The Phantom was especially fun in *Harvey Comics Hits* #51, his first Harvey appearance, in "Curse of the Phantom's Treasure." In this story, The Phantom educates his beloved Diana about the "Jungle Olympics," including such events as the broad jump over "hungry crocodiles," the two-mile run through "animal-infested woods," and the 100-yard dash "over hot coals." Now, those were surely comic book firsts!

By 1960, when Richie Rich graduated from *Little Dot* into his own comic book — and fittingly began to become a 1960s and 1970s goldmine for Harvey — *Dick Tracy* had been reduced to bi-monthly and *Joe Palooka* to quarterly. *Dick Tracy* staggered on for two more issues in 1961 and *Joe Palooka* for one issue. Harvey did begin to experiment again with sporadic non-humor themes in 1962 and later, but *The Phantom* could not have been a stranger choice in 1957-1961.

It's interesting to note, however, that the character enjoyed a respectable run from 1962-77 from Gold Key, King, and Charlton, *sans* the ancient looking reprints.

As I indicated last issue, Harvey was often a hotbed of odd house ads. Such was the case with The Phantom's appearance in *Harvey Hits* #15 (Dec 58), which featured one of those delightful two-page "Spoonmen" advertising centerfolds. (What Baby Boomer doesn't remember Spoonmen plugging the delicious "spoon-sized Shredded Wheat"?) On the other side of the Spoonmen, Harvey included one of its colorful full-page house ads with 18 cover reproductions. Included in Harvey's December issues was the cover for the never-published *Mazie* #29! (*Mazie* was discontinued with #28, Aug 58. I experienced a lot of frustration trying to find that issue of *Mazie*, since it was one of my favorite comics. Why, I asked myself, was this issue nowhere to be found? Why, I wondered, would Harvey publish the cover, if the issue never appeared? In those days, it was impossible to find out!)

Another Harvey oddity was the firm's four-issue flirtation with *Flash Gordon* in 1950-51, following Flash's final appearance

Harvey Hits #26 Nov 1959 ★★★

Writer: Lee Falk
Pencils: Uncredited
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Uncredited

"The Adventure of the Wild Girl!" • 23 pp.

A circus girl named Dara decides the jungle is the place for her, but she needs The Phantom to prevent her running afoul of the law.

This far-out but fun story is the best and most logical of the series, given the circumstances.

"Ned Hall of the Foreign Legion" • 2 text pp.

Best CGC copy: 8.0

Then 10c NOW $75

Harvey Hits #36 Sep 1960 ★★★½

Writer: Lee Falk
Pencils: Uncredited
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Uncredited

"The Secret of the Lost Treasure City!" • 19 pp.

The Phantom proves to a couple of unethical treasure hunters how "Captain Kidder" acquired his name.

Would you believe a treasure chest filled with bills and I.O.U.s? A nifty twist ending.

"True Stories of Famous Dogs" • 1 pg.

"How to Make Your Spinning Rope" • 1 pg.

"How to Ride a Horse" • 1 pg.

"Fearless Rough Rider" • 1 text pg.

"Dangerous Mission" • 1 text pg.

Best CGC copy: 8.5

Then 10c NOW $65

Harvey Hits #44 May 1961 ★★★

Writer: Lee Falk
Pencils: Wilson McCoy
Inks: McCoy
Cover: Uncredited

"Hoodoo of the Pirate Ship" • 13 pp.

"The Phantom and the Ape" • 7 pp.

The Phantom wins the respect of Diana's mother when he defeats The Ape, "The King of the Gangsters."

A solid story, but the old-style 12 panels to a page probably didn't sit well with young readers in 1961, when much brighter Silver Age comics were hitting the stands.

"Famous Dogs of History" • 1 pg.; "How to Spin a Rope" • 1 pg.; "How to Ride a Horse" • 1 pg.; "The Warrior" • 1 text pg.; "Desert Scene" • 1 text pg.

No CGC copies

Then 10c NOW $52

Harvey Hits #48 Sep 1961 ★★★

Writer: Lee Falk
Pencils: Uncredited
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Uncredited

"The Ghost Who Walks in Uranium Valley!" • 13 pp.

"Back from the Dead!" • 9 pp.

The Phantom visits a nearby town incognito.

In an excellent story, The Phantom uses his humanity to defeat uranium pirates.

"How to Ride a Horse" • 1 pg.

"Ricardo and the Wolves" • 1 text pg.

"Tuaregs" • 1 text pg.

No CGC copies

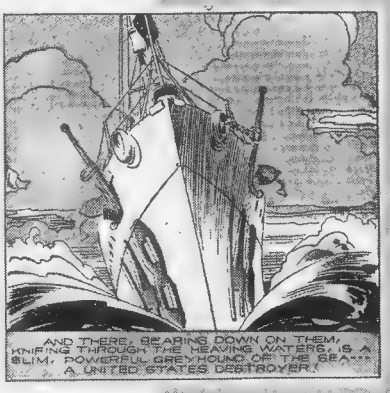
Then 10c NOW $45

© King Features

in the last David McKay comic book, *King Comics* #155 (Dec 49). Even though *Flash Gordon* strip reprints were still running in *King*, Dell apparently was allowed to publish four original Flash Gordon *Four Color* issues in 1947-49, all by Paul Norris. Even so, Dell's earlier Flash Gordon *Four Color* #10 and #84 reprinted newspaper strips that already had appeared in *King Comics*, four strips to each issue.

At any rate, nobody was doing Flash Gordon in comic books in 1950, and that was the year George Pal's film *Destination Moon* enhanced the 1950s science-fiction craze in the media. I'm not sure if Universal's three Flash Gordon serials from 1936, 1938, and 1940 were running on early television in 1950, but they soon would be all over the nation. So Harvey obtained *Flash* from King and produced four issues of gorgeous full-color Alex Raymond strip reprints from #1 (Oct 50) to #4 (Apr 51). The first three issues reproduced a total of 63 consecutive strips from 1940-41 — not seen since they'd been reprinted in *King Comics* nearly a decade earlier. For some strange reason, however, #4 mysteriously went back to a different storyline in 1937-38 and must have confused the heck out of readers.

Cover proofs exist of Harvey's #5, and the cover is even shown in a house ad at the end of #4, even though the first three issues contain no such house ads: just another Harvey house ad fiasco. But *Flash Gordon* #5 was not published, other than (it is said) as a digest-sized black-and-white version sent to a few subscribers. (I've never known anyone who has one of these.)



After Harvey gave up the *Flash Gordon* ghost, Dell came out with three more issues in 1952-53, plus Western's three *March of Comics* giveaways in 1954-56. Harvey's judgment apparently was correct, because Flash wasn't seen again in comic books until a 1965 Gold Key reprint of part of 1947's *Four Color* #173 — although 37 issues were to come later from the King, Charlton, and Whitman output.

Flash Gordon Comics #1 Oct 1950 ★★★★

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Alex Raymond
Inks: Raymond
Cover: Uncredited

"Flash Faces the Rocket Bombers" • 15 pp.

"Revenge of the Power Man" • 7 pp.

These 22 Sunday Raymond strips from July 14 to Dec. 8, 1940, tell the tale of the Power Men of Mongo.

When Harvey reprinted these, they had not been seen since they'd run in *King Comics* #64-69 (1941-42).

"The First Spaceship!" • 1 pg.; "The World You Will Live In" • 1 pg.; "Flash Gordon's Spaceship" • 1 pg.; "The Island King" • 1 text pg.; "The Green Men of Mars" • 1 text pg.

Best CGC copy: 9.6

Then 10c NOW $225

Flash Gordon Comics #2 Dec 1950 ★★★★

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils and Inks: Alex Raymond, Bob Powell
Cover: Uncredited

"One Man Raid on Mongo" • 15 pp.

"Fight for Freedom" • 5 pp.

In a cliffhanger ending, Flash and Dale take pills to fool Ming into thinking they have died, as part of the Power Men sequence.

These gorgeous strips from Dec. 15, 1940, to April 27, 1941, had not been seen since *King Comics* #70-74 in 1942, so they were fresh for most readers.

"Know Your Planets" • 1 pg.; "Stories behind the Stars" • 1 pg.; "The World You Will Live In" • 1 pg.; "The Watery Grave" • 1 text pg.; "The Menacing Monster" • 1 text pg.

Best CGC copy: 9.0

Then 10c NOW $145

Flash Gordon Comics #3 Feb 1951 ★★★★

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Alex Raymond
Inks: Raymond
Cover: Uncredited

"Battle to the Death!" • 15 pp.

"The Blade of Terror" • 6 pp.

Flash and Dale, revived, free Mongo from the tyranny of Ming and return to Earth to defeat foreign treachery in the months leading up to World War II.

These strips from May 4, 1941, to Sept. 21, 1941, are some of the prettiest in Raymond's decade-long run with *Flash Gordon*. They had not been seen since *King Comics* #75-80 in 1942.

"Know Your Planets" • 1 pg.; "Stories behind the Stars" • 1 pg.; "The World You Will Live In" • 1 pg.; "The Pit of Terror" • 1 text pg.

Best CGC copy: 7.0

Then 10c NOW $110

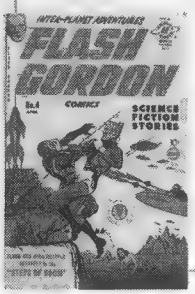
Flash Gordon Comics #4 Apr 1951 ★★★★

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils and Inks: Alex Raymond, Bob Powell
Cover: Uncredited

"Steps of Doom" • 15 pp.

"Back from the Dead" • 7 pp.

Instead of going forward with 1941 and 1942 strips, Harvey chose to reprint strips from Oct. 24, 1937, to March 20, 1938, which had not been seen since *King Comics* #29-34.



This earlier battle with Ming must have confused readers of the previous three issues, but the Harvey reprint series was halted at this point.

"Stories behind the Stars" • 1 pg.; "Know Your Planets" • 1 pg.; "The World You Will Live In" • 1 pg.; (Has ad for never-published #5.)

Best CGC copy: 7.0

Then 10c NOW $110

© King Features

Amazing Spider-Girl #29-30
Marvel

$3.99 @, color, 32 pgs. @
Writers: Tom DeFalco, Ron Frenz; Artists: Frenz, Sal Buscema
reviewed by **Kurt A. Krug**

★★★

With #30, *The Amazing Spider-Girl* comes to an end as Spider-Girl battles the Goblin God, who is a combination of Norman Osborn, Peter Parker, and a clone of Spider-Girl. The battle takes place mostly in a dreamscape as writer Tom DeFalco takes readers back to Spider-Man's first battle with Norman Osborn in Stan Lee and Steve Ditko's *Amazing Spider-Man* #14. Throughout it, Spider-Girl is guided by the most important woman in Peter's life this side of Mary Jane. **Hint:** It's not Gwen Stacy.

DeFalco and Ron Frenz, his longtime collaborator, bring the series (which is the longest-running series at Marvel to feature a solo female lead, when you add in the first series) to a satisfying conclusion. It doesn't end on a sad note; that would be against the book's grain because this has always been a fun, optimistic book and makes no apologies for it. Further, it shouldn't have to. Don't be surprised if Spider-Girl returns to her own monthly series someday; she's been threatened with cancellation several times and was granted a new lease on life. Until then, she'll be in *Spider-Man Family*.

www.marvel.com

RetroView

Batman: Cacophony

Reviewed by Brent Frankenhoff

While the majority of our *Retroviews* focus on older series and mini-series, we thought it would be fun to tackle a recently released title.

The three-part mini-series *Batman: Cacophony* features The Joker's war with Maxie Zeus, along with a subplot involving writer Kevin Smith's creation Onomatopoeia, who was originally a Green Arrow villain who communicates by using the ambient sounds around him. There are plenty of twists and turns along the way in a story that should delight Bat fans.

Batman: Cacophony ™ DC

COST TO OWN THE ORIGINALS IN NM: $13

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Action Comics DC, 1936	
0	3
1	330000
➥1st Superman	
1/Ashcan	20000
2	29250
3	19000
4-5	10600
6	15400
7	15500
8-9	6650
10	8200
11-12	4150
13	6175
14	3825
15	6175
16	3125
17	4350
18	3825
19	4050
20	3825
21-22	2600
23	7300
➥1st Luthor	
24-25	2475
26	2060
27-30	1700
31-32	2600
33	7300
➥1st Mr. America	
34-35	2475
36	2060
37-40	1700
41	1050
42	2600
➥1st Vigilante	
43-46	980
47	1300
➥1st Luthor cover	
48-52	980
53	850
54-60	710
61-63	630
64	750
65-70	630
71-99	580
100	600
101	1200
➥A-Bomb cover	
102-126	525
127	600
128-150	525
151-157	480
158	750
➥Superman origin	
159-161	450
162	500
163-180	385
181-201	340
202-220	290
221-240	240
241	250
242	1200
➥1st Brainiac	
243-251	185
252	1200
➥1st Supergirl	
253	425
254	325
255	225
256-261	100
262	90
263	100
264-266	80
267	650
➥1st Colossal Boy	
268-270	80
271-275	65
276	125
➥Legion app.	
277-284	60
285	100
➥Legion app.	
286-294	60
295	90
296	65
297	90
298-299	60
300-316	50
317-324	40
325	50
326-333	40
334	60
335-338	40
339	70
340-346	40
347	50
348-362	40
363-373	30
374-387	20
388	25
389-399	20
400	40
401-406	17
407	15
408	20
409	15
410-411	13
412-415	12
416-418	11
419	14
420-422	11
423-424	10
425	19
426	10
427-436	8
437	29
➥Giant-size issue	
438-439	8
440	25
➥1st Greil Green Arrow	
441	12
442	8
443	26
➥Giant-size issue	
444-454	7
455-465	6
466	7
467-484	5
485	8
486-503	5
504-544	4
545-566	3
567-597	2
598	15
➥1st Checkmate	
599	2
600	5
601-659	2
660	3
661	2
662	4
663-682	2
683-684	3
685-687	2
687/CS	3
688-695	2
695/Variant	3
696-699	2
700	3
700/Platinum	5
701-769	2
770	4
771-774	2
775	5
775/2nd	4
776-799	2
800	4
801-810	2
811	5
812	8
812/2nd	2
813	4
814-817	3
818	4
819-825	3
826	5
➥Inf. Crisis tie	
827-828	3
829	6
829/Variant	3
830	4
831-843	3
844	6
845	5
846-849	3
850	4
851-857	3
858	6
859-861	3
862	0
1000000	1
Ann 1	4
Ann 2-6	3
Ann 7	4
Ann 8	3
Ann 9	4
Adventure Comics DC, 1938	
32	2800
33-35	1450
36-39	1275
40	36000
➥1st Sandman	
41	4700
42	5500
43	3200
44	5500
45	2800
46-47	4200
48	22000
➥1st Hourman	
49-50	1950
51	2630
➥Sandman cover	
52	1600
➥1st Kirk Manhunter	
53-59	1450
60	2500
61	10750
➥1st Starman	
62-65	1300
66	1800
67-68	1300
69	1650
70-71	1275
72	13200
➥1st Kirby Sandman	
73	11500
➥1st Kirby Manhunter	
74-80	1500
81-91	925
92-99	700
100	800
101-102	700
103	2400
➥Super-heroes start	
104	850
105-110	525
111-120	450
121-126	390
127	450
128	400
129-130	375
131-149	340
150-151	425
152	310
153	425
154	310
155	425
156	310
157	425
158	310
159	425
160	310
161	425
162	310
163	425
164-169	310
170-180	255
181-199	235
200	350
201-209	260
210	2400
➥1st Krypto	
211-220	200
221-246	170
247	4400
➥1st Legion	
248-255	130
256	525
257-259	125
260	500
➥Aquaman origin	
261-266	80
267	740
➥2nd Legion	
268	80
269	225
➥1st Aqualad	
270	80
271	225
➥Lex Luthor origin	
272-274	65
275	145
276-280	65
281	60
282	95
283	100
284	60
285-286	110
287-289	60
290	100
291-292	45
293	100
294	90
➥1st Mon-El Legion	
295-298	45
299	55
300	200
➥Legion	
301	70
302-305	55
306-323	45
324-339	40
340	45
341-345	40
346	60
347-350	40
➥1st White Witch	
351-352	50
353-355	35
356	30
357	60
358-366	30
367-372	25
373	22
374	30
375-377	22
378	45
379-380	22
381	60
➥Supergirl starts	
382-389	22
390	30
391-400	22
401-402	21
403	50
404-415	20
416	18
417-427	13
428	28
➥1st Black Orchid	
429-430	15
431	28
➥Aparo Spectre	
432-433	15
434-435	12
436-441	10
442-447	6
448-458	5
459-460	4
461	6
462	7
463-479	4
480-503	3
Albedo THOUGHTS & IMAGES, 1984	
0	8
0/A	30
0/B	15
1	14
1/A	10
2	250
➥1st Usagi Yojimbo	
3	10
4-5	4
6-8	3
9-14	2
All New Collectors' Edition DC, 1977	
C-53	26
➥Rudolph	
C-54	12
➥Supes v. WWoman	
C-55	15
C-56	40
➥Superman vs. Ali	
C-58	12
➥Supes vs. Shazam	
C-60	20
➥Rudolph's Summer	
C-62	12
➥Superman movie	
All Star Batman and Robin Boy Wonder DC, 2005	
1/Both	5
1/Special	4
1/RRP	150
2/Both	4
3-8	3
All-Star Comics DC, 1940	
1	10000
2	3500
3	25000
➥1st JSA	
4	3000
5	2800
➥1st Hawkgirl	
6-7	1800
8	16000
➥1st Wonder Woman	
9-11	1600
12-15	1400
16-25	1200
26-32	900

PRICE GUIDE KEY: OTHER GRADES

Unslabbed (loose) Very Fine/Near Mint is **5/6 (83%)** of the unslabbed NM price above
Very Fine (VF) is **2/3 (67%)** of NM
Fine (F) is **1/3 (33%)** of NM
Very Good (VG) is **1/5 (20%)** of NM
Good (G) is **1/8 (12.5%)** of NM

RETROVIEW

Batman: Cacophony #1 ★★★★

© DC

"Bring the Noise"

Deadshot's attempted assassination of The Joker is interrupted by Green Arrow villain Onomatopoeia, who frees The Joker from Arkham Asylum. The Joker then confronts Maxie Zeus, who has made a new designer drug by watering down Joker's venom with Ecstasy.

Kevin Smith returns to DC comics for this three-issue mini-series in which he proves what a master wordsmith he can be. This first issue sets up the rest of the story effortlessly with plenty of action and the sharp dialogue that Smith is known for.

Walt Flanagan's art is reminiscent of Jim Aparo's with all the characters clearly defined and well-lit.

DC
Jan 2009 • 30 pp.
Writer: Kevin Smith
Pencils: Walter Flanagan
Inks: Sandra Hope
Cover: Adam Kubert

Was $3.99 NOW $5

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
33	1800
➥Grundy appearance	
34-35	900
36	1300
➥Batmn, Supes app.	
37	900
38	975
➥Black Canary starts	
39-49	900
50	975
➥Frazetta art	
51-56	900
57	1200
➥25-year hiatus starts	
58	12
➥1st Power Girl	
59-61	6
62	8
63	6
64-65	7
66	8
67-68	6
69	10
70-73	6
74	8

All-Star Superman
DC, 2006

1-9	3

All-Star Western
DC, 1970

1	30
2-3	15
4-5	14
6-9	9
10	260
➥1st Jonah Hex	
11	75

All-Winners Comics
TIMELY, 1941

1	16000
➥Cap America starts	
2	4800
3	2850
4	2800
5-6	2100
7-10	1800
11-18	1275
19	3350
➥All-Winner Squad organized	
21	3500
➥Scarce	

All-Winners Comics
TIMELY, 1948

1	1800

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Alpha Flight MARVEL, 1983	
1	5
➥1st Marrina, Puck	
2-10	4
11-19	3
20-24	2
25-27	1
28	3
29-32	2
33	6
➥Wolverine appears	
34	3
35-45	2
46	3
47	4
➥1st Jim Lee at Marvel	
48-53	2
54	3
55-56	2
57-74	1
75-105	2
106	3
➥Northstar outed	
107-130	2
Ann 1	4
Ann 2	1
Special 1	3

Amazing Adult Fantasy
MARVEL, 1961

7	600
8	475
9-13	425
14	525

Amazing Fantasy
MARVEL, 1962

15	32000
➥1st Spider-Man	
16-18	5

Amazing Spider-Man
MARVEL, 1963

-1	3
1	27000
➥1st Chameleon	
1/Golden	200
2	3400
➥1st Vulture	
3	4600
➥1st Dr. Octopus	
4	2300
➥1st Sandman	
5	2500
➥Dr. Doom app	
6	1650
➥1st Lizard	
7	1100

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
8	800
9	1025
➥1st Electro	
10	990
11	1900
12	825
13	1200
➥1st Mysterio	
14	2050
➥1st Green Goblin	
15	1800
➥1st Kraven	
16-17	800
➥2nd Green Goblin	
18	510
➥1st Ned Leeds	
19	460
20-21	510
22	425
23	510
24-25	500
26	550
27	500
28	450
29-30	240
31	325
32	175
33	140
34	240
35-36	225
37	250
38	195
39	350
➥1st Romita Spidey	
40	375
➥Goblin origin	
41	300
➥1st Rhino	
42	185
➥1st view of MJ	
43	120
44	175
45	115
46	250
➥1st Shocker	
47	105
48	120
49	125
50	625
➥Spidey quits	
51	200
52	150
53	105
54-55	110
56	90
57	80
58	100
59	70
60	105
61	72
62	75
63	160

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
➥vs. both Vultures	
64	60
65	55
66	80
➥1st Randy	
67-68	60
69	75
70-71	70
72	85
73	50
74	80
75-77	65
78	70
79-80	60
81	55
82-83	50
84-85	55
86	60
87	75
88	60
89	70
90	75
91	50
92	62
93	80
94	65
95	52
96	85
97	72
98	80
99	60
100	100
101	130
102	105
➥Morbius origin	
103	50
104	90
105	25
106	40
107-108	27
109-110	30
111	34
112	30
113	35
114	50
115	33
116	22
117	25
118	22
119-120	50
121-122	150
123	35
124	42
125	30
126	18
127	25
128	20
129	225
➥1st Punisher	
129/Ace	6
130	20
131	25

Do-It-Yourself Grading

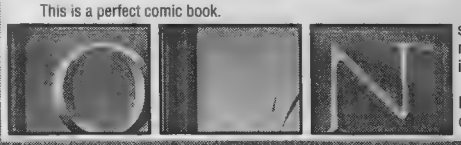
While **CGC** keeps its grading standards privatese are the **traditional** condition definitions...

Mint

Abbreviated: **M**

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 10.0 grade.**

This is a perfect comic book.



Its cover has full luster, with edges sharp and pages like new. There are no signs of wear or aging. It is not imperfectly printed or off-center.

Occasionally referred to as "Gem Mint," a term used by sportscard dealers.

Near Mint

Abbreviated: **NM**

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 9.4 grade.**

This is a nearly perfect comic book.

Its cover shows barely perceptible signs of wear.

Its spine is tight, and its cover has only minor loss of luster and only minor printing defects. Some discoloration is acceptable in older comics — as are signs of aging.

Very Fine

Abbreviated: **VF**

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 8.0 grade.**

A **Very Fine** copy has beginning signs of wear.

There can be slight creases and wrinkles at the staples, but it is a flat, clean issue with definite signs of being read a few times.

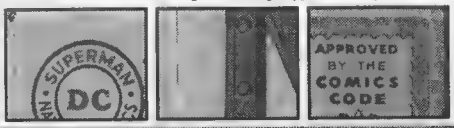
There is some loss of the original gloss, but it is in general an attractive comic book.

Fine

Abbreviated: **F, Fn**

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 6.0 grade.**

A **Fine** comic book is a good-looking copy ... at first glance.



This comic book's cover is worn but flat and clean with no defacement. There is usually no writing on the cover or tape repair.

Stress lines around the staples and more rounded corners are permitted.

Very Good

Abbreviated: **VG**

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 4.0 grade.**

A **Very Good** comic book is well-read and has some problems.

Most of the original gloss is gone. There are minor markings, discoloration, and/or heavier stress lines around the staples and spine.

The cover may have minor tears and/or corner creases, and spine-rolling is generally permissible.

Good

Abbreviated: **G, Gd**

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 2.0 grade.**

A **Good** copy is a very worn comic book with nothing missing.

Creases, minor tears, rolled spine, and cover flaking are generally permissible in this grade.

Older Golden Age comic books often come in this condition.

Fair

Abbreviated: **FA, Fr.**

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 1.0 grade.**

A **Fair** copy has multiple problems but is structurally intact.

Copies may have a soiled, slightly damaged cover, a badly rolled spine, cover flaking, corners gone, and tears.

Tape may be present and is always considered a defect.

Poor

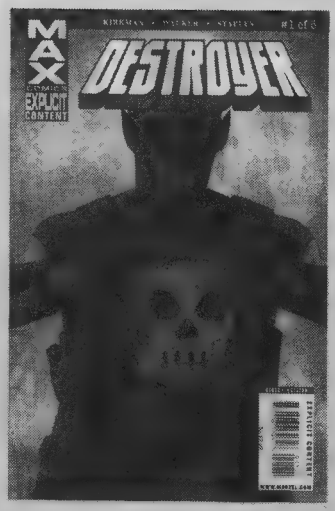
Abbreviated: **P, Pr**

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 0.5 grade.**

A **Poor** copy is damaged and generally unsuitable for collecting.

While the copy may still contain some readable stories, major defects get in the way.

Copies may be in the process of disintegrating and may do so with even light handling.



Destroyer #1
Marvel/MAX

$3.99, color, 32 pgs.
Writer: Robert Kirkman
Artist: Cory Walker
reviewed by **Mart Gray**

★★★

There are some lovely touching moments in this first issue as Stan Lee's first creation gets a mini series. Golden Age survivor Keen Marlow loves his wife Harriet and Robert Kirkman imbues their scenes with a real tenderness as Marlow keeps from her the truth that he hasn't long to live. And a post-explosion scene, with Marlow naked and looking vulnerable among the rubble, has real poignancy.

There are also plenty of truly nasty scenes, as his super-soldier alter-ego The Destroyer busts heads. Literally. I've never seen so much gore on the page and, like the swearing and blinding that accompanies the killing, it serves no real story purpose. Yes, this comic is published under Marvel's MAX imprint, but the savagery on show seems pointless. Kirkman could have accomplished the same thing with less gore and widened his audience.

Cory Walker's action scenes are slyly amusing but the "acting" was disappointing, with facial expressions repeating and even some panels reproduced.

I'll be interested to learn where this story goes, but I don't think I'll put my money down to find out from the comics themselves.

www.marvel.com

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Amazing Spider-Man CONTINUED
132. 22
133. 16
134. 28
➥2nd Punisher
135. 45
136. 60
➥Harry as Goblin II
137. 25
138. 15
139. 19
140. 17
141. 15
142. 18
143. 15
144. 17
145-146 15
147. 14
148. 25
149. 27
➥Spider-clone dies
150. 16
151. 24
152. 11
153-154 10
155. 12
155/30¢ 20
156. 12
156/30¢ 20
157. 12
157/30¢ 40
158. 10
158/30¢ 20
159. 11
➥vs. Doc Ock
159/30¢ 20
160. 9
161. 12
162. 11
163. 10
164. 12
165-166 9
167-168 7
169. 10
169/35¢ 15
170. 7
170/35¢ 15
171. 7
171/35¢ 15
172. 8
172/35¢ 15
173. 18
173/35¢ 25
174-175 10
176-177 12
➥1st Hamilton Goblin
178-180 11
181. 9
182. 8
183. 7
184. 8
185. 7
186-187 8
188. 7
189. 6
190. 7
191-193 6
194. 21
➥1st Black Cat
195. 10
196-198 6
199. 7
200. 10
201. 9
202. 7
203. 6
204. 8
205-206 6
207. 5
208-211 6
212-218 5
219-220 6
221-222 4
223. 5
224-225 4
226. 7
227. 6
228. 4
229. 11
230-232 6
233. 4
234. 6
235. 4
236-237 5
238. 22
➥1st Hobgoblin
239. 10
240. 5
241. 4
242. 5
243. 6
244-245 5
246-248 4
249. 5
250-251 6
252. 10
➥1st black costume
253-254 5
255-258 4
259-263 5
264-265 4
266-267 3
268-270 4
271. 5
272-273 4
274-276 5
277-279 4
280-284 5
285. 6
286. 4
287. 5
288-289 6
290-293 5
294-295 6
296. 5
297. 6
298. 16
➥McFarlane starts
299. 9
➥Venom cameo
300. 35
➥1st Venom
301. 6
302. 4
303. 5
304-307 4
308. 5
309. 4
310-313 5
314. 4
315-316 5
317-318 6
319. 5
320. 3
321. 4
322. 5
323. 3
324. 5
325-327 4
328. 5
329. 4
330-343 3
344. 4
➥1st Cletus Kassidy
345-347 3
348-353 2
354. 3
355-357 2
358. 6
359. 2
360. 3
361. 6
➥1st Carnage
362. 25
➥2nd Carnage
363. 4
364. 3
365. 4
366-369 2
370. 3
371-373 2
374. 3
375. 5
376. 4
377. 3
378. 4
379. 5
380. 3
381. 4
382-388 3
388/Variant . . . 2
389-394 3

RETROVIEW

Batman: Cacophony #2 ★★★★

"Wired for Sound"

Batman forces Maxie Zeus to surrender to the police and baits a trap for The Joker.

Kevin Smith's story continues to shine with additional discussions about heroes, villains, and even how *Clash of the Titans* mixed mythological creatures from different pantheons. Fans of Smith's work don't need to be told that this is classic Smith, but it should be pointed out that this is Smith at his best.

Aided by Walter Flanagan's art, the story keeps readers turning the pages just to see what happens next or what insights will be uttered by any of the major players.

DC
Feb 2009 • 30 pp.
Writer: Kevin Smith
Pencils: Walter Flanagan
Inks: Sandra Hope
Cover: Adam Kubert

Then $3.99 NOW $4

UNSLABBED Near Mint

394/Variant . . . 4
395-399 3
400. 5
400/Overlay . . 30
401-432 2
432/Variant . . . 5
433-441 2
500. 5
501. 4
502. 3
503-509 2
509/DirCut 7
➥Director's Cut
510. 4
511. 3
512. 5
513. 3
514-520 2
521-528 3
529. 20
529/2nd 6
529/3rd 5
530. 8
531-532 6
533-536 4
537. 3
538. 6
539. 10
540-541 5
542-544 3
545. 4
546. 6
547-582 3
583. 15
584-588 3
Aim Giveaway 1 4
Aim Giveaway 2 2
Ann 1 700
➥1st Sinister Six
Ann 2 550
Ann 3 140
Ann 4 90
Ann 5 75
Ann 6-7 35
Ann 8-9 22
Ann 10-12 8
Ann 13 7
Ann 14 6
Ann 15 7
Ann 16 5
Ann 17-21 4
➥Spidey marries
Ann 22 5
Ann 23-28 3
Ann '96-'97 . . . 4
Ashcan 1 1

Amazing Spider-Man
MARVEL, 1999
1. 7
1/DF Romita. . 12

UNSLABBED Near Mint

1/DF Lee. 35
1/Authentix. . . . 8
1/Sunburst. . . 18
2/Both 3
3-11 2
12. 3
13-17 2
18-19 3
20. 5
21-24 2
25. 3
25/Speckle 4
26-29 2
30. 5
➥Straczynski starts
31. 3
32-33 4
34. 5
35. 4
36. 9
➥9/11 issue
37-39 3
40. 2
41. 4
42-43 3
44-49 2
50. 6
51-56 2
57-58 3
Ann '99-'00 . . . 4
Ann 2001 3

Angel and the Ape
DC, 1968
1. 40
2. 20
3-7 15

Animal Comics
DELL, 1942
1. 900
2. 450
3. 340
4. 150
5. 300
6-7 135
➥War bonds cover
8-10 225
11-15 170
16-20 130
21-25 105
26-30 80

Aquaman
DC, 1962
1. 900
2. 275
3-5 150
6-10 90
11. 125
➥1st Mera

UNSLABBED Near Mint

12-17 75
18. 90
➥Weds Mera
19-28 60
29. 75
➥1st Ocean Master
30. 50
31. 45
32. 50
33-34 45
35-41 40
42-43 30
44-46 25
47. 40
48-49 25
50. 75
51. 50
52. 40
53-58 20
59-63 10

Army of Darkness
DARK HORSE, 1992
1. 12
2-3 9

Astonishing Tales
MARVEL, 1970
1. 40
2-5 20
6. 12
7-8 15
9. 10
10. 20
11. 10
12. 30
➥Man-Thing story
13-20 10
21. 25
22. 10
23. 15
24. 10
25. 25
➥1st Deathlok
26. 10
27-29 7
30-32 5
33. 10
34. 6
35. 7
➥Low distribution
35/30¢ 20
➥Low distribution
36-36/30¢ . . . 10

Astro Boy
GOLD KEY, 1965
1. 265

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Atom
DC, 1962
1. 750
2. 300
3. 225
4-5 175
6. 125
7. 250
➥Hawkman app.
8. 125
9. 90
10-13 85
14. 95
➥Hawkman app
15. 85
16-17 45
18. 50
19. 45
20. 60
21-23 35
24. 40
25. 50
26-28 35
29. 100
30. 55
31. 48
32. 35
33. 40
34-35 35
36-37 45
38. 30
Special 1-2. . . . 3

Atom and Hawkman
DC, 1968
39-41 30
42. 35
43-45 30

Authority
DC, 1999
1. 5
2-3 4
4-29 3
Ann 2000 4

Avengers
MARVEL, 1963
0. 3
1. 4200
➥1st Avengers
1.5 3
2. 935
3. 750
4. 1450
➥Cap. America joins
4/Golden 40
5. 350
6. 390
7. 460
8. 275
9. 225

Batman: Cacophony #3 ★★★★

"Baffles"

Batman is faced with a moral dilemma when Onomatopoeia mortally wounds The Joker.

Kevin Smith and Walter Flanagan wrap up the mini-series in an unexpected manner. After Batman and Commissioner Gordon wrestle with whether to save The Joker or let him die, readers are given additional insight into what drives the constant feud between The Dark Knight and The Harlequin of Hate. Smith nails The Joker's obsession.

At the end, Onomatopoeia is further developed as a character and events are left open-ended enough for a sequel. Here's hoping it comes sooner rather than later.

DC
Mar 2009 • 30 pp.
Writer: Kevin Smith
Pencils: Walter Flanagan
Inks: Sandra Hope
Cover: Adam Kubert

Thon $3.99 NOW $4

UNSLABBED Near Mint

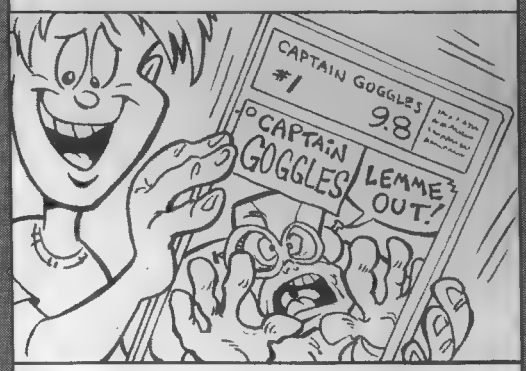
- ➥1st Wonder Man
10. 180
- ➥1st Hercules
11. 275
- ➥Spider-Man app.
12. 115
13-14 150
15. 100
16. 125
17. 115
18. 100
19. 150
20. 80
21-22 70
23. 75
24. 70
25. 95
26. 65
27. 70
28-30 50
31. 43
32. 37
33. 50
34. 55
35. 50
36. 35
37. 40
38. 43
39-41 40
42. 50
43. 45
44. 40
45. 50
46. 30
47-48 37
49. 32
50. 30
51. 40
52. 41
53. 60
- ➥X-Men app.
54-55 30
56. 50
57. 110
- ➥1st Vision
58. 65
59-60 40
61-66 30
67. 45
68. 27
69-70 30
71. 50
- ➥1st Invaders
72-73 30
74-76 25
77. 20
78. 25
79-81 23
82. 26
83. 36
- ➥1st Valkyrie
84. 23
85-86 25
87. 40
88. 25
89. 20
90-91 22
92. 26
93. 120
- ➥Double-size
94. 35
95. 38
96. 35
97-98 26
99. 30
100. 55
- ➥Knight gets sword
101. 18
102. 16
103. 40
- ➥Sentinels
104. 20
105. 18
106. 17
107. 20
108. 12
109. 18
110. 25
111. 22
112. 25
113. 11
114. 15
115. 13
116. 27
- ➥Defenders War
117. 20
118. 24
119. 15
120. 14
121. 10
122. 13
123. 9
124. 12
125. 20
126. 18
127-129 12
130. 15
131. 12
132. 10
133. 8
134-135 10
136-137 8
138-140 7
141. 10
142-145 8
146. 10
146/30¢ 18
147. 7
147/30¢ 15
148. 12
148/30¢ 18
149. 6
149/30¢ 15
150. 7
150/30¢ 15
151. 7
152-155 6
156. 9
157. 6
158-159 8
160. 6
160/35¢ 15
161. 7
161/35¢ 15
162. 8
162/35¢ 15
163. 7
163/35¢-164/35¢ 15
165-166 6
167. 5
168. 7
169-170 4
171. 6
172-174 4
175. 5
176-180 4
181. 5
182. 4
183-184 6
185. 7
186. 5
187-189 6
190. 4
191-195 5
196. 7
197-199 5
200. 9
- ➥Double-size
201-218 3
219-224 2
225. 3
226-249 2
250. 3
251-262 2
263. 3
264-349 2
350. 3
351-359 1
360. 3
361-362 1
363. 3
364-365 1
366. 4
- ➥Foil cover
367-368 1
369. 3
370-374 1
375. 2
375/Collector's . 3
376-379 2
379/Double . . . 3
380. 2
380/Double . . . 3
381. 2
381/Double . . . 3
382. 2
382/Double . . . 3
383-399 2
400. 4
401-402 3
Ann 1 125
Ann 2 120
Ann 3-4 22
Ann 5 25
Ann 6 7
Ann 7 12
Ann 8-9 8
Ann 10 9
Ann 11-16 4
Ann 17-23 3

Batman
DC, 1940

0. 3
1. 80000
- ➥1st Catwoman
2. 15000
3. 9750
4. 7500
5. 5500
- ➥1st Batmobile
6-7 4500
8. 4000
9. 3750
10. 7500
11. 4750
12. 2900
- ➥1st Batcave
13-14 2775
15. 2625
16. 4600
- ➥1st Alfred
17-20 1650
21-22 1275
23. 2000
24. 1275
25. 2050
26-30 1275
31-36 950
37. 1200
38. 1000
39. 950
40. 1140
41-43 760
44. 1080
45-46 760
47. 3000
- ➥Batman origin
48. 965
49. 1350
- ➥1st Mad Hatter
50-51 690
52. 850
53-54 690
55. 850
56-57 690
58. 750
59-61 690
62. 1250
- ➥Catwoman origin
63. 575
64. 515
65. 575
66. 660
- ➥vs Joker
67-68 515
69. 575
70-72 515
73. 660
74. 550
75-77 500
78. 585
79-80 500
81. 485
82-83 435
84. 485
85-90 435
91-99 400
100. 2000
- ➥Anniversary issue
101-104 400
105. 490
106-109 400
110. 425
111-120 290
121. 375
- ➥1st Mr. Freeze
122. 225
123. 220
124-126 195
127. 240
- ➥vs. Joker
128. 195
129. 250
- ➥Robin origin
130. 195
131. 145
132-135 130
136. 215
- ➥vs. Joker
137-145 140
146-147 110
148. 140
- ➥vs. Joker
149-150 110
151. 90
152. 100
153. 125
154. 85
155. 300
- ➥1st SA Penguin
156-164 85
165. 130
166-168 85
169. 90
170. 85
171. 450
- ➥1st SA Riddler
172. 125
173-175 75
176. 85
177. 75
178. 85
179. 120
- ➥vs Riddler
180. 60
181. 175
- ➥1st Poison Ivy
182-185 60
186. 70
187. 65
188. 40
189. 250
- ➥1st SA Scarecrow
190. 45
191. 40
192. 60
193. 70
194. 80
195-196 40
197. 100
- ➥Catwoman app.
198. 85
199. 40
200. 100
- ➥Robin origin
201-202 35
203-204 30
205. 40

The Basics

Encasing comic books in plastic? Sounds crazy!



But it isn't as crazy as it sounds...

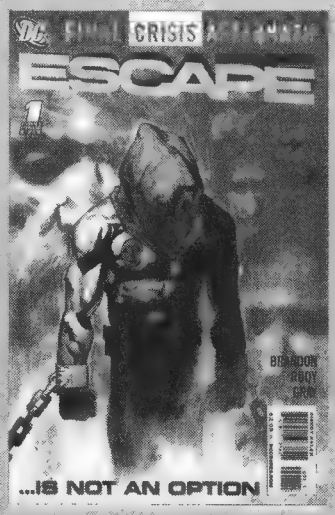
Judging the condition of an older comic book is one of the most challenging parts of collecting. When a minor difference in grade equates to thousands of dollars, everyone needs to agree.

In the past, a lot of people outside the hobby who **might** have been interested in investing in comics avoided them for this reason. You just can't get a college degree in comic-book grading!

With the advent of third-party grading services, anyone can buy and sell investment-grade comic books, regardless of their background.

That's had some interesting effects. Sales of comic books online have skyrocketed. And people have been willing to pay more for "slabbed" versions of many (but **not** all!) comics, because the grade makes it easier to resell.

Art Chuck Rose



Final Crisis Aftermath: Escape #1

DC

$2.99, color, 32 pgs.
Writer: Ivan Brandon
Artists: Marco Rudy, Mick Gray
reviewed by **Mart Gray**

★★★

Super-spy Nemesis is drugged and abducted by a mysterious organization for an unknown purpose. And that, in a nutshell, is the first issue of this *Final Crisis Aftermath* mini-series. Tom Tresser, late of *Wonder Woman*, spends the issue seeing people from his past, being confused by strangers and fading in and out of consciousness.

Given my strong dislike of comics in which not much happens, I shouldn't like this, but I do. Writer Ivan Brandon uses the issue's structure to introduce the characters who, presumably, will populate this story and, with artists Marco Rudy and Mick Gray, he conveys a strong sense of disorientation. Colorists Richard and Tanya Horie play their part, using intelligently chosen tones for the various nightmare scenes.

The dialogue is terrific as Nemesis is taunted and challenged and it's marvelous to see an intense Tresser for the first time in years. I've no idea where this book is going — this first issue happily steers clear of the Guantanamo-style tortures hinted at by early publicity and Scott Hampton's moody cover — but it bears following.

www.dccomics.com

Batman (CONTINUED)	UNSLABBED Near Mint
206	30
207-208	50
209-212	30
213	45
214-217	30
218	70
➥Giant-size	
219	50
220-221	30
222	75
223	40
224-226	30
227	50
228	40
229-231	30
232	350
➥1st Ra's al Ghul	
233	30
234	115
➥1st SA Two-Face	
235	17
236	25
237	75
➥1st Reaper	
238	65
➥100 pages	
239-240	17
241	30
242	17
243	70
➥vs. Ra's al Ghul	
244	65
➥vs. Ra's al Ghul	
245	70
246-247	15
248	20
249-250	15
251	60
➥vs. Joker	
252	14
253	26
254-255	32
256-258	35
259-261	32
262-263	15
264-266	9
267-285	8
286	12
➥vs. Joker	
287-290	9
291	12
292-294	9
295-299	8
300	15
301-331	7
332	8
333-352	7
353	5
354-356	7
357	9
358-367	7
368	8
369-370	6
371-399	5
400	10
401-403	4
404	5
405	6
406-408	5
409-416	3
417	5
418-420	4
421-425	3
426-427	6
427/Direct	4
428	6
429	4
430	3
431-435	2
436	3
437-441	2
442	3
443-456	2
457	3
457/Direct	4
458-486	2
487	1
488-492	3
492/Silver	5
493	3
494-496	2
497	3
498-500	2
500/CS	4
501-515	2
515/Variant	4
516-530	2
530/Variant	3
531	2
531/Variant	3
532	2
532/Variant	3
533-535	2
535/Variant	4
536-549	2
550	3
550/Variant	4
551-562	2
563-564	3
565-599	2
600	4
601-607	2
608	5
➥Jim Lee begins	
609	4
610-619/2nd	3
620-629	2
630	3
631-632	2
633	3
634	6
635	15
➥Red Hood	
636-637	12
638	11
638/2nd	6
639	16
640-641	6
642-650	3
651	6
652-682	3
683	5
1000000	4
Ann 1	540
Ann 2	275
Ann 3	215
Ann 4-5	110
Ann 6-7	85
Ann 8	7
Ann 9-11	6
Ann 12-13	5
Ann 14-15	3
Ann 15/Silver	4
Ann 16-18	3
Ann 19-21	4
Ann 22-23	3
Ann 24	4
Ann 25	12
GS 1-2	5
GS 3	6

Beware the Creeper
DC, 1968

1	45
2-5	32
6	55

Bionic Woman
CHARLTON, 1977

1	14
2-5	6

Birds of Prey
DC, 1999

1	4
2-7	3
8	12
➥Nightwing app.	
9-75	3
76	15
➥1st Black Alice	
77-99	3
100	4
101	3

Bizarre Adventures
MARVEL, 1981

25-26	3
27	4
28	5
29-34	3

Black Cat Comics
HARVEY, 1946

1	450
2	275
3-5	220
6-8	175
9	225
10-20	135
21-29	100
30	150
31	130
32-42	125
43	75
44-50	125
51	165
52-62	54
63	80
64-65	75

Black Goliath
MARVEL, 1976

1	11
2	5
2/30¢	20
3	4
3/30¢	20
4	4
4/30¢	20
5	4

Blackhawk
DC, 1944

9	2600
10	1100
11	900
12-15	800
16-20	525
21-25	460
26-30	400
31-35	350
36-40	300
41-49	225
50	200
51-60	165
61-70	145
71	200
➥Blackhawk origin	
72-80	130
81-86	125
87-92	120
93	135
94-99	110
100	140
101-107	105
108	325
➥1st DC issue	
109	130
110-117	110
118	135
119-130	85
131-140	65
141-149	50
150-163	48
164	60
165-166	48
167-180	22
181-200	16
201-227	15
228	30
229-243	15
244-260	4
261-273	3

Black Lightning
DC, 1977

1	10
2-11	5

Black Lightning
DC, 1995

1	3
2-5	2
6	3
7-13	2

Black Orchid
DC, 1993

1	3
1/Platinum	5
2-22	2
Ann 1	4

Black Orchid
DC, 1988

1	6
➥1st U.S. Gaiman	
2-3	5

Black Panther
MARVEL, 1977

1	12
2	7
3-5	5
5/35¢	15
6-10	5
11-15	4

Black Panther
MARVEL, 1998

1	5
1/Variant	7
2/A-2/B	4
3-62	3

Blazing Combat
WARREN, 1965

1	90
2-3	30
4	40
Ann 1	45

Bloodshot
VALIANT, 1993

0/VVSS	25
0/PlatError	750
0	3
0/Gold	25
1	2
2-6	1
6/VVSS	50
7-15	1
16	2
17-24	1
25-37	2
38-43	3
44-47	4
48-49	5
50	6
51	10
YB 1	5

Blue Beetle
CHARLTON, 1964

1	45
2	30
3-5	20

Blue Beetle
CHARLTON, 1965

50-54	27
1	60
2	40
3-5	27

Bone
CARTOON BOOKS, 1991

1	80
2	45
3	25
4	16
5	12
6-8	7
9-13.5/Gold	4
14-55	3
Special 1	2

Boris Karloff Tales of Mystery
GOLD KEY, 1963

3	27
4-5	25
6-8	20
9	25
10	15
11	22
12	15
13-14	12
15	15
16-20	12
21	18
22-30	10
31-40	9
41-50	8
51-59	6
60-74	5
75-79	3
80-85	6
➥Giant issues; scarce	
86-97	3

Boy Comics
LEV GLEASON, 1942

3	1500
4	1100
5	575
6	950
➥Iron Jaw origin	
7	620
8	515
9	450
10	615
11-14	350
15	400
16	225
17	250
18-20	200
21-25	140
26-29	130
30	200
➥Crimebuster origin	
31-40	58
41-50	42
51-62	30
63-80	27
81-100	24
101-119	22

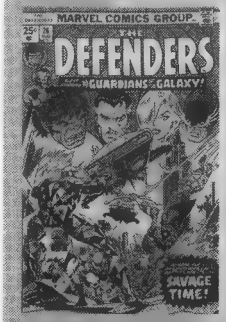
Brave and the Bold
DC, 1955

1	3000
2	1500
3	700
4-5	650
6-10	500
11-22	400
23	500
➥Vik. Prince origin	
24	350
25	500
➥1st Suicide Squad	
26	325
27	330
28	5000
➥1st JLA	
29	2000
30	1750
31	350
32-33	200
34	1750
➥1st SA Hawkman	

RETROVIEW

Defenders #26

★★★



Marvel
Aug 1975 • 18 pp.
Writer: Steve Gerber
Pencils: Sal Buscema
Inks: Vince Colletta
Cover: Gil Kane, John Romita

"Savage Time!"

A visit to the 20th century by 31st century freedom fighters The Guardians of the Galaxy reveals a possible future chronology of the Marvel universe, including the events of Killraven's time.

As part of a larger crossover tale featuring The Defenders and The Guardians, this chapter does a great job of showing that Killraven's adventures don't take place on some alternate Earth, but on Marvel Earth, a theme that the 1990s *Guardians of the Galaxy* series explores further.

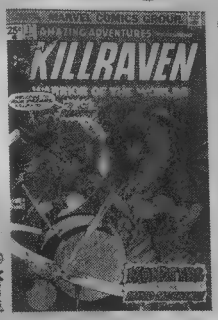
However, the message here comes with a heavy-handed environmental screed from Steve Gerber. Aerosol sprays are bad, m'kay?

© Marvel

CGC 2009: 9.6 Then 25¢ NOW $7

RETROVIEW

Amazing Adventures #32 ★★★



© Marvel

"Only the Computer Shows Me Any Respect!"

An immersive interactive music and light show poses new dangers for Killraven and his friends in Nashville.

This interlude chapter is almost a Done in One story, with only a subplot to remind readers of Skar's quest muddying the waters.

Don McGregor and Craig Russell continue to stretch the boundaries of the comics medium with innovative layouts and unexpected scripting. This issue, some of that scripting reads like a drug-induced trip, which was the point of the computerized show that Killraven and his friends encountered.

Marvel
Sep 1975 • 18 pp.
Writer: Don McGregor
Pencils: Craig Russell
Inks: Dan Green
Cover: Russell

Best CGC copy 9.6

Then 25c NOW $3

I've Been Slabbed!

A big question on the minds of comics collectors these days is: Who will take up the mantle of Batman now that Bruce Wayne is "dead"? How will that question (and its answer) affect the market for "Modern" CGC-graded comics — and what are the issues to watch for? *Final Crisis* #6 is the death issue, and the Batman cover currently sells for close to $100 in an issue the third-party grading service evaluated at 9.8. The alternate cover sells for a little less than half of that in CGC 9.8. Ungraded prices range from $5 to $15 on eBay.

Another issue to watch for is the comic book that presents the new Batman for the first time. There's lots of speculation on who the next Batman will be (and what issue he will appear in first), but I think the odds-on favorite at this point is Dick Grayson, the first Robin. If that's the case, then Dick's early appearances in the Golden Age (introduced in *Detective Comics* #38, Apr 40) may show some appreciation, as well as his first appearance as Nightwing in *Tales of the Teen Titans* #44 (Jul 84). *New Teen Titans* #39 (Grayson's last appearance as Robin, Feb 84) last sold in CGC 9.8 in October 2007 for $41, and *Tales of the Teen Titans* #44 last sold in CGC 9.8 in April 2009 for $61 (there are 100 9.8s of this issue on the CGC census). These key issues are relatively affordable, and their prices may see a spike after the new Batman storyline plays itself out.

Here are this month's picks:

***Amazing Spider-Man* #600.** Another landmark issue for Spider-Man, and this one sports an Alex Ross cover. The landmark #500 issue (Dec 03) has held its value at around $40 in CGC 9.8 since it came out, suggesting #600 will, as well.

***Wolverine Origins* #10.** This is the first appearance of Daken, Wolverine's son. He entered the mainstream Marvel universe during the "Dark Reign" saga and is now a member of the Dark Avengers. *Wolverine Origins* #10 has three covers: an orange Arthur Suydam cover, a Joe Quesada cover showing two of Daken's claws, and the same Quesada cover showing all three of Daken's claws. The third cover was a 1:100 variant and sells in CGC 9.8 for $250+. I know that sounds expensive, but this could be a key issue, if the character has a long lifespan.

***Dark Wolverine* #75.** Daken takes over Wolverine's series! Daken has donned the brown costume and has his own title for who knows how long. The character has emerged as one of the most interesting new characters since X-23.

Powers. It's looking as if Brian Michael Bendis and Michael Avon Oeming's series is coming to TV — most likely on the F/X network. Now might be a good time to pick up back issues at reasonable prices. Issue #1 of the Image series recently sold for only $12 in CGC 9.8! Issue #1 of the Marvel/Icon series sold in February 2009 for $4 in CGC 9.8! These issues may turn out to be hidden gems, if the TV series comes to be.

***Batman and Robin* #1.** This is a new series by Grant Morrison and Frank Quitely, the same team that brought us *All Star Superman*. I'm excited about this title, since I enjoyed *All Star Superman* so much. In terms of value, this book may or may not prove to be CGC-worthy. The *All Star Superman* series didn't do well from an investment point of view.

***Captain America* #600.** Captain America reaches a landmark issue sporting a 50/50 variant cover by Alex Ross. I like the fact that Marvel is going back to its original numbering with the series (same with *Thor* and *Hulk*). I'm also looking forward to the full gallery of all 600 *Captain America* covers found in this issue.

Predator. There's a new Predator series coming out from Dark Horse, and it may bring collectors back to the original *Predator* series published by Dark Horse in 1989. The first issue of the 1989 series sells for $50 to $75 in CGC 9.8.

***The Spirit* #31.** I'm not sure that this book is investment quality, but the team is a great throwback to the 1970s. Mike Ploog is writing and drawing the book, and Nick Cardy is doing the cover.

*Steve Mortensen owns Colossus Comics (**www.colossuscomics.com**) and **Micurio.com**, a free online community for sharing all your collectibles. He can be reached at **steve@colossuscomics.com**.*

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
35-36	400
37	250
38-39	225
40-41	140
42	300
43	350
➥Hawkman origin	
44	260
45-49	60
50	175
51	225
52	125
53	75
54	350
➥1st Teen Titans	
55-56	45
57	150
➥1st Metamorpho	
58	65
59	80
60	100
➥1st Wonder Girl	
61	125
➥Starman origin	
62	100
➥1st SA Wildcat	
63	40
64	60
65-66	22
67	65
➥Batman starts	
68	80
➥Batman Hulk parody	
69-73	50
74	40
75	60
76	50
77-78	40
79	75
➥Batman, Deadman	
80-82	50
83	60
84	50
85	60
➥N. Adams GA	
86	50
87	26
88-90	20
91-92	18
93	30
94	18
95	24
96-98	15
99	22
100	30
101-102	15
103-110	12
111-114	18
115	22
116-118	18
119-126	7
127-128	6
129-130	11
131	6
132	4
133	5
134-140	4
141	10
142-179	4
180-190	3
191	8
192-196	3
197-199	3
200	7
Ann 1	6

Buffy the Vampire Slayer
DARK HORSE, 1998

0.5/All	7
1	5
1/A	10
1/B	5
1/Gold	10
2	4
2-3/Variants	5
4-20/Both	4
21-49/Both	3
50/Both	4
51-63	3
Ann 1999	6

Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Season Eight
DARK HORSE, 2007

1/Both	15
2	6
3	4
4-26	3

Caliber Presents
CALIBER, 1989

1	15
➥1st Crow	
2-7	3
8	2
9-24	3

Captain Action
DC, 1968

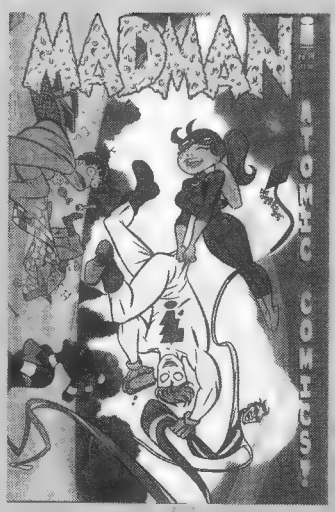
1	45
2-4	35
5	20

Captain America
MARVEL, 1968

100	210
101	55
102-108	35
109	45
➥Origin retold	
110	75
➥Steranko begins	
111	65
112	50
113	60
➥Avengers app.	
114-116	30
117	95
➥1st Falcon	
118-124	25
125-127	20
128-130	15
131-132	18
133	15
134-136	18
137	35
138	30
139-146	25
147	18
148	16
149	15
150	25
151-153	15
154-155	25
156	20
157-162	10
163-164	12
165-167	10
168	15
169	10
170	12
171-172	10
173	15
174	12
175-176	10
177-183	8
184-187	5
188	8
189-196	6
196/30¢	20
197	5
197/30¢	20
198	6
198/30¢	20
199	5
199/30¢	20
200	6
200/30¢	20
201	6
202	4
203	5
204-205	4
206	5
207	4
208-209	5
210	4
210/35¢	15
211	4
211/35¢	15
212	4
212/35¢	15
213	4
213/35¢	15
214	4
214/35¢	15
215-233	4
234	6
235-240	4
241	8
242-255	4
256-271	2
272	3
273-275	2
276	4
277-281	2
282	3
283	2
284	3
285	2
286-288	3
289-297	2
298	3
299-331	2
332	3
333-349	2
350	3
351-382	2
383	3
384-399	2
400	3
401-420	2
420/CS	3
421-424	2
425	3
425/Variant	4
426-443	2
444	3
445-454	2
Ann 1	35
Ann 2	20
Ann 3-4	8
Ann 5-7	3
Ann 8	12
➥Wolverine app.	
Ann 9-13	3
Ashcan 1	1
Special 1-2	4

Captain America
MARVEL, 2005

1	8
2-3	5
4-5	3
6	7
6/Variant	5
7	3
8	5
9-21	3
22-24	5
25-25/Variant	15
26-33	3



Madman Atomic Comics #14
Image

$3.50, color, 32 pgs.
Writer and artist: Mike Allred
reviewed by **Timothy J. Wood**
★★★

Frank and Joe hike up the side of a mountain. Frank continues to the top, where he plays with his latest Madman toy. Frank becomes the victim of unsafe hunting practices. Frank has a really cool centerspread hallucination that riffs on a certain popular tale involving wizards and witches and munchkins. Frank wakes up in a hospital room surrounded by his friends and realizes that there's no place like — well, fill in the rest.

It isn't unusual for a Mike Allred story to take a sudden turn from whimsy to misfortune. The transition here is uneven, but the before and after are clever and entertaining enough to sustain the dark patch.

The backup story by J. Bone, with art by Darwyn Cooke, is a more straightforward comic outing. In "It's A Mad, Mad, Mad, Madman Movie," Frank gets dragooned into playing his own stunt double in a special effects-laden film while waiting for Joe at the "Megaversal Studios" theme park. The usual high jinks ensue as Frank is manipulated by the movie's "star" in a motion capture suit acting out a fight scene.

www.imagecomics.com

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Captain America CONTINUED
34. 6
35. 5
36-46 3

Captain America Comics
MARVEL, 1941
1. 80000
2. 20000
3. 10000
4. 6500
5. 5500
6. 4750
7. 5500
8. 4000
9-10 3600
11-12 3100
13. 3275
14-15 3100
16. 3600
17. 2585
18-20 2075
21-22 1850
22/A 12000
➥Giant size issue
23-25 1850
26-30 1650
31-35 1385
36. 1650
37. 1550
38-40 1285
41-58 1175
59. 2650
➥Cap origin
60. 1175
61. 1850
62-65 1075
66. 1400
67-70 1175
71-73 1025
74. 4350
➥Cap Weird Tales
75. 2750
76-78 875

Captain Atom
CHARLTON, 1965
78. 40
79-85 25
86-89 20

Captain Marvel
MARVEL, 1968
1. 60
2-3 18
4. 24
5. 15
6. 30
7-8 15
9. 25
10-15 15
16. 25
17-24 22
➥Thanos War starts
25-27 25
28. 30
29. 16
30. 12
31. 16
32-33 12
34. 6
35-37 3
38. 5
39-44 3
44/30¢ 20
45. 3
45/30¢ 20
46-47 3
48. 9
49. 3
50. 10
51-52 4
52/35¢ 15
53-54 3
55. 5
56. 3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

57. 6
58-62 3

Captain Marvel Adventures
FAWCETT, 1941
1. 27500
2. 3500
3. 1800
4. 1200
5. 1050
6-7 750
8-10 675
11-15 590
16-17 550
18. 1800
➥1st Mary Marvel
19-20 500
21-22 400
23. 610
➥1st Mr. Mind
24-40 225
41. 190
42. 163
43-109 125
110-120 80
121. 115
➥Cap Marvel origin
122-150 80

Challengers of the Unknown
DC, 1958
1. 1450
2. 375
3-8 220
9-10 140
11-15 90
16-23 52
24-31 25
32-49 20
50-56 15
57-69 11
70-73 7
74. 14
➥Adams art; Deadman
75-80 7
81. 6
82-87 5

Chamber of Chills
HARVEY, 1951
1. 350
2-4 275
5-9 250
10-19 225
20-25 200
26. 175

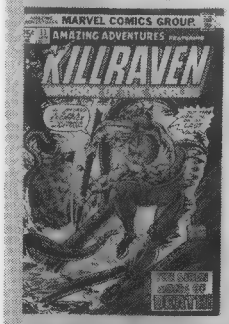
Chamber of Darkness
MARVEL, 1968
1. 60
➥Becomes Monsters on the Prowl
2. 35
3. 30
4. 60
➥BWS Conan tryout
5-7 30
8-1/Special. . . 20

Chilling Adventures in Sorcery
ARCHIE, 1972
1. 42
2. 25
3-5 15

Civil War
MARVEL, 2006
1. 5
2. 7
2/Variant 8
3. 5
3/2nd 3
4. 5
4/Variant 3
5. 4

RETROVIEW

Amazing Adventures #33 ★★★½



Marvel
Nov 1975 • 18 pp.
Writer: Bill Mantlo
Pencils: Herb Trimpe
Inks: D. Bruce Berry
Cover: John Romita & Russell

"Sing Out Loudly ... Death!"

While sheltering in a cave for the night, Killraven is captured by a group of African-Americans who have been hiding deeper in the caverns since the Martian invasion.

Why Don McGregor and Craig Russell need a break from a bimonthly title is questionable, but it does provide an opportunity for Bill Mantlo and Herb Trimpe to show what other groups are doing in the wake of the Martian invasion.

The story itself, unfortunately, reinforces a number of stereotypes while poking fun at others. The hidden group has no idea what the KKK was, for example, but does know that white men are bad.

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Best CGC copy 9.6 — Then 25¢ NOW $3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

5/Variant 3
6. 4
Choosing Sides 1 . . 4
Confession 1 8
Front Line 1-10 . . . 3
The Initiative 1 . . . 6
War Crimes 1 4
X-Men 1-4 3

Claw the Unconquered
DC, 1975
1. 7
2. 4
3. 3
4-6 2
7. 4
8-12 2

Clerks: The Comic Book
ONI, 1998
1. 5
2. 3
Holiday 1 4

Combat
DELL, 1961
1. 10
2. 20
3. 18
4. 25
➥JFK story
5. 16
6-9 12
10-20 9
21-27 8
28-40 6

Combat Kelly
MARVEL, 1972
1. 10
2-3 6
4-9 4

Conan
DARK HORSE, 2004
0. 4
1. 10
1/2nd 3
2. 5
2/2nd-50 3

Conan the Barbarian
MARVEL, 1970
1. 160
➥1st comics Conan
2. 55
3. 72
4. 26
5. 30

UNSLABBED Near Mint

6-7 26
8. 30
9. 20
➥Giant-size
10-11 35
➥Giant-size
12. 15
13-14 20
15. 17
16. 20
17. 17
18. 20
19. 17
20. 27
➥1st Red Sonja
21-24 20
25. 10
26-30 8
31-35 7
36-38 9
39-47 7
48-50 6
51-61 5
61/30¢ 20
62. 5
62/30¢ 20
63. 5
63/30¢ 20
64. 5
64/30¢ 20
65. 5
65/30¢ 20
66-75 5
75/35¢ 15
76. 5
76/35¢ 15
77. 5
77/35¢ 15
78. 5
78/35¢ 15
79. 5
79/35¢ 15
80-93 5
94-99 4
100. 6
101-275 2
Ann 1 10
Ann 2-3 6
Ann 4-12 2
Special 1 3

Crazy
MARVEL, 1973
1. 16
2-3 10

Crazy
MARVEL, 1973
1. 16
2-3 10
4-5 5
6-15 3
16-94 2

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Creatures on the Loose
MARVEL, 1971
10. 50
➥1st Kull; Wrightson
11-15 15
16-22 10
23-26 6
27-29 5
30. 25
➥Man-Wolf
31. 12
32-36 8
37. 12
King Size 1. . . 10

Creepy
WARREN, 1964
1. 160
2. 50
3. 25
4. 35
5. 18
6. 15
7-8 24
9. 45
10. 20
11-13 15
14. 22
15. 25
16-17 30
18. 25
19-20 15
21-22 12
23-25 11
26-31 10
32. 35
33-35 10
36. 15
37-38 10
39-40 7
41. 10
42-47 6
48. 9
49. 6
50. 12
51-54 6
55. 9
56-64 5
65. 8
66-73 5
74. 10
75-76 5
77. 10
78-82 5
83. 6
84. 5
85-87 6
88-90 5
91. 6
92-94 5

UNSLABBED Near Mint

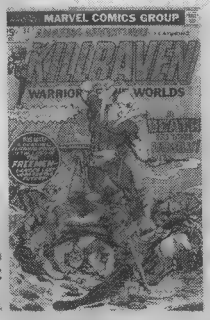
95. 6
96-100 5
101-102 4
103. 6
104-112 4
113. 7
114-140 4
141. 5
142. 6
143-144 5
145. 6
146. 22
Ann '71-'72 . . 15
YB '68-'70 . . . 18

Crime & Justice
CHARLTON, 1951
1. 240
2. 125
3-5 100
6-10 80
11-19 65
20-23 50

Crime Does Not Pay
LEV GLEASON, 1942
22. 800
23. 525
24. 375
25-30 225
31-41 115
42. 110
43-50 90
51-60 65
61-70 60
71-80 50
81-90 42
91-100 35
101-130 30
131-146 26
Ann 1944 . . . 700
Ann 1945 . . . 600
Ann '46-'49 . 500
Ann '50-'53 . 400

Crime Suspen-Stories
E.C., 1950
1. 800
1/A 1000
➥#1 marked out
2. 475
3-5 315
6-10 235
11-12 185
13. 210
14-15 185
16. 190
17. 235

Amazing Adventure #34 ★★★



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"A Death in the Family"

Two members of Killraven's group die in a final showdown with Skar.

It's taken many months, but Skar finally catches up to Killraven's band of freemen and exacts a terrible vengeance before being beaten himself.

The cover would indicate that all succumb to Skar's attack, and Don McGregor does an excellent job of keeping readers guessing who will live and who will die. Obviously, being the star of the book, Killraven has the best chance of survival, but everyone else could be expendable.

Carmilla Frost's revelations as to the origins of Grok are not the surprise that McGregor was probably hoping for.

Marvel
Jan 1976 • 18 pp.
Writer: Don McGregor
Pencils: Craig Russell
Inks: Russell
Cover: Russell

Mint (VF/NM) 9.8 — Then 25¢ NOW $3

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
➥Frazetta art	
18-19	170
20	215
21	115
22-23	145
24-27	115
Crisis on Infinite Earths DC, 1985	
1	5
2-3	4
4	3
5	5
6	3
7-8	5
9-12	3
Crypt of Shadows MARVEL, 1973	
1	35
2	16
3	15
4-5	12
6-14	10
15-21	8
Crypt of Terror E.C., 1950	
17	1000
18	800
19	750
Dagar the Invincible GOLD KEY, 1972	
1	16
2	11
3-11	7
12-14	5
15-18	3
19	2
Danger Trail DC, 1950	
1	875
2	600
3	1250
➥Scarce	
4-5	385
Daredevil MARVEL, 1964	
-1	2
1	3000
➥1st Daredevil	
2	750
3	550
4	400
5	300
6	225
7	675
➥1st red costume	
8-10	135
11-15	85
➥Spider-Man app.	
16-17	120
➥Spider-Man app.	
18	70
➥1st Gladiator	
19	60
20	55
21-27	50
28-30	45
31-42	40
43	45
44-49	30
50-52	33
53-71	20
72-80	17
81	25
➥Giant-size	
82-83	17
84-99	14
100	30
➥Origin recap	
101-130	8
131	75
➥1st Bullseye	
132	15
132/30¢	20
133	6
133/30¢	20
134	6
134/30¢	20
135	6
135/30¢	20
136	6
136/30¢	20
137-146	6
146/35¢	15
147	6
147/35¢	15
148	6
148/35¢	15
149-157	6
158	50
➥Frank Miller starts	
159	22
160-161	17
162	9
163	18
164-167	11
168	75
➥1st Elektra	
169	16
170	10
171	12
172-177	7
178-180	6
181	15
➥Elektra dies	
182-183	7
184	6
185	5
186	6
187-190	5
191	6
192-195	3
196	6
197-204	3
205	4
206-226	3
227	4
➥FM Born Again	
228-247	3
248-249	4
250	3
251	5
252	4
253	3
254	6
➥1st Typhoid Mary	
255-257	3
258	4
259-295	3
296-299	2
300	3
301-303	2
304	3
305-311	2
312	3
313-318	2
319	5
320-321	2
321/Variant	3
322-324	2
325	3
326-349	2
350	3
350/Variant	4
351-374	2
375	3
376-379	2
380	3
Ann 1	50
Ann 2-3	9
Ann 4	8
Ann 5	4
Ann 6-10	3
Ann 1997	4
Daredevil MARVEL, 1998	
0.5	5
1	7
1/Ltd.	50
1/Variant	9
2/A-2/B	5
3-5	4
5/A	5
6	3
7	4
8-15	3
16	5
16/Unlimited	6
17	3
17/Unlimited	5
➥Newsstand variant	
18-20	3
20/Unlimited	5
21	3
21/Unlimited	5
22	3
22/Unlimited	5
23	3
23/Unlimited	5
24-36	3
36/No #	5
➥Newsstand; no #	
37	3
37/Unlimited	5
➥Newsstand variant	
37/No #	4
➥Newsstand; no #	
38-56	3
57	4
58-64	3
65	4
66-89	3
89/Sketch	6
90-112	3
Dark Horse Presents DARK HORSE, 1986	
1	4
2-4	3
5-9	2
10-16	3
17	2
18	3
19-23	2
24	6
➥1st comics Aliens	
25-27	2
28	3
29-31	2
32	4
➥Concrete app.	
33-35	3
36	4
36/A	3
37-39	2
40	3
41-49	2
50	3
51	4
➥2nd Sin City	
52-53	3
54	4
55	2
56-57	4
58	2
59-61	3
62	4
➥All Sin City	
63-66	3
67	4
68-134	3
135	4
136-149	3
150	5
151-157	3
Ann '97-'00	5
DC Comics Presents DC, 1978	
1	9
2	7
3	4
4-5	2
6	6
7-9	2
9/Whitman	6
10-25	2
26	14
➥1st New Teen Titans	
27	3
28-41	2
42-43	1
44	2
45-46	1
47	17
➥1st Masters Universe	
48-50	1
51	6
52	3
53-71	1
72	2
73-76	1
77-78	3
79-84	1
85	6
86	4
87-92	1
93	2
94-97	1
Ann 1-	3
DC 100 Page Super Spectacular DC, 1971	
4	175
5	350
➥Scarce	
6	150
7	60
8-9	75
10-13	60
14-17	45
18	30
19	24
20	35
21-22	22
DC Special DC, 1968	
1	60
2	50
3	35
4	25
5-14	20
15	16
16-28	10
29	12
DC Special Series DC, 1977	
1	10
2-5	7
6-8	6
9	16
10-14	6
15	8
16	20
➥Jonah Hex dies	
17-18	5
19-20	6
21	12
➥1st Miller Batman	
22-26	6
27	18

CBG Trendwatcher

Michael Tierney, Collector's Edition

The dead part of this year's first quarter started with the President's Day Holiday in February, and sales flat-lined at 1999 levels after that point. We saw a good bump once Tax Day was past, but everyone quickly went back to being cautious with their money.

This was the first time in 27 years of comics retailing that I didn't see a bump from tax refund spending.

Right now, the publishers are completely out of sync with my customer's buying habits. There seems to be more discretionary income to spend at the start of each month, but little key product to chose from. Then, when wallets get flat in the latter half of the month, the shelves get flooded. Budgets don't change, so there are a lot of new titles, especially mini-series and one shots from Marvel and DC, that are performing very poorly right now.

Titles such as *Wolverine: Weapon X*, which shipped early in the month, quickly sold out and went to a second printing. But part of that particular sales bump may have resulted from the new *X-Men: Origins: Wolverine* movie. The sneak peak premiere of a bootleg on the Internet had a lot customers telling me that they'd watched but wished they hadn't, preferring in retrospect to wait for the finished cut.

Other than that, most sales patterns from the previous two months continued. *Dark Avengers* is still hot, and the rest of the "Dark Reign" titles aren't. Marvel's series of 70th anniversary books are selling mediocre numbers.

A lot of late books from DC finally shipped, as *Green Lantern* is surging in popularity thanks to the upcoming "Blackest Night" event. Despite having ordered heavily on it, *Flash: Rebirth* #1 was a quick sellout. Batman's "Battle for the Cowl" is generating steady, though moderate interest.

While new comics sales were unimpressive, back issues came to life when investors, disillusioned with the stock market, turned to the Golden and Silver Age back issues. A book based on a character who has been popular for half a century or more is likely to hold its value in the future, having already proven the test of time. Customers were talking about how their comics collections were performing better than their 401(k) retirement plans.

But the biggest news came after April ended. May 1 saw huge crowds buying comics during my sale that led up to that Saturday's Free Comic Book Day, May 2. Despite bad weather, one store matched the best FCBD crowds that it had ever had. But the other location boomed, thanks mostly to heavy rain canceling my annual competition from the Toad Suck Festival.

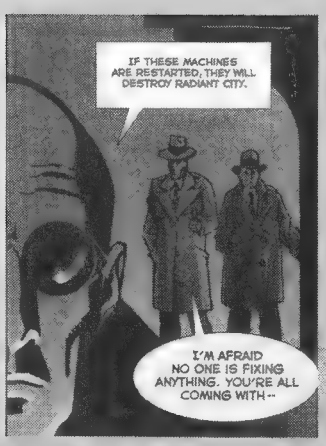
Free outdoor concerts normally trump free comics. But, with those concerts and the Cow Chip Tossing Contest canceled, my other store saw a 400% increase in traffic when compared to last year.

These were the heaviest crowds since the day Superman died, and younger readers were their biggest component. There's no doubt about it. Kids still love comics, and parents are looking to buy appropriate fare.

Key Sales (all unslabbed):

Adventure Comics #167 FN+ $200
Batman #135 FN- $56.25
Crime Does Not Pay #49 FN- $18
Journey into Mystery #87 GD+ $70
Superboy #36 FN+ $77
Superman #64 GD+ $80

Michael Tierney *runs* ***Collector's Edition*** *in North Little Rock and* ***The Comic Book Store*** *in Little Rock, Ark. He can be reached at* ***cbsrock@swbell.net*** *or* ***(501) 791-4222.***



Mister X: Condemned #3-4
Dark Horse

$3.50 @, color, 24 pgs. @
Writer and artist: Dean Motter
reviewed by **Ray Sidman**

★★★

One part fantasy, one part classic crime noir, and one part deadpan, *Mister X: Condemned* continues in the cult following footsteps of Dean Motter's original independent series. While it's unclear how well it'll fare in terms of mainstream sales, it's a solid story deserving of print. Motter's creativity permeates this story of architecture gone supernaturally awry, keeping it interesting throughout.

Between obscure cultural references and dry — often superlatively so — humor, Motter's characters sound like a group of Joe Friday prodigies. Some on the take, some suspect, some not. *Que sera.*

For those who enjoy *Mister X*, the final page of *Condemned* offers this hope: "He'll turn up again. His work is far from finished." It's not something to do the Extreme Joy-Joy Dance about, but having future *Mister X* series would be a welcome addition to the comics-shop pull list.

www.darkhorse.com

Defenders
MARVEL, 1972

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	90
2	35
3	30
4-5	26
6-7	16
8	25
9	16
10	55
➥Avengers War	
11	15
12-13	9
14-16	10
17-20	7
21-24	6
25-29	7
30-33	4
34-38	5
34-38/30¢	20
39-47	4
48-52	5
48-52/35¢	15
53-62	4
63	5
64-92	4
93-100	3
101-152	2
Ann 1	12

Detective Comics
DC, 1936

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
0	3
1	80000
2	18250
3	10800
4-5	6850
6-7	4450
8	6500
9-17	4350
18	5000
19	4150
20	6300
21	3250
22	3950
23-26	3250
27	225000
➥1st Batman	
27/2nd	9
28	25000
➥2nd Batman	
29	35000
30	7500
31	27500
➥Batman vs. Monk	
32	6000
33	50000
➥Batman origin	
34	7500
35	10000
36-37	6500
38	57500
➥1st Robin	
39	6000
40	6500
41	4000
42-45	3000
46-50	2000
51-57	1750
58	4750
➥1st Penguin	
59	2000
60	1750
61	1500
62	2250
63	1750
64	5000
➥1st Boy Commandos	
65	2250
66	4000
➥1st Two-Face	
67	2000
68-69	1750
70-71	1500
72-75	1250
76	1500
77-79	1000
80	1250
81-83	1000
84	900
85	1250
86-90	900
91	1000
92-98	800
99	950
100	1000
101	700
102	950
103-108	625
109	850
110-113	625
114	800
115-117	625
118	825
119	600
120	800
➥Penguin app.	
121	600
122	1225
123	600
124	800
125-127	600
128	800
129-130	600
131-136	525
137	675
138	925
➥Robotman origin	
139	500
140	4000
➥1st Riddler	
141	575
142	1250
143-148	575
149	675
150	550
151	600
152-155	525
156	625
157-160	500
161-167	525
168	3750
➥Joker origin	
169-170	500
171	700
172-176	500
177-179	400
180	450
181-186	400
187	425
188-189	400
190	600
191-192	400
193	450
194-199	400
200	575
201-202	400
203	450
204	400
205	575
206-210	400
211	450
212	400
213	525
214-224	375
225	4500
➥1st Manhunter	
226	1500
227-229	500
230	550
231	400
232	300
233	1250
➥1st Batwoman	
234	325
235	600
236	350
237-240	300
241-260	250
261-264	200
265	325
266	200
267	250
268-271	200
272	175
273	200
274-280	150
281-297	125
298	200
299-310	100
311	200
➥1st Catman	
312-326	100
327	225
➥New Bat symbol	
328	175
➥Alfred dies	
329-330	75
331	65
332	115
➥Joker	
333-340	60
341	75
342-352	60
353-358	75
359	350
➥1st Batgirl	
360-362	65
363	100
➥2nd Batgirl	
364	60
365	90
366-368	60
369	75
370	45
371	80
➥Batmobile	
372-376	50
377	65
378-380	50
381-386	40
387	75
388	50
389-390	35
391-393	25
394	35
395	125
➥N. Adams art	
396-397	35
398-399	30
400	175
➥1st Man-Bat	
401	30
402	55
403-404	35
405-407	30
408-410	40
411	30
➥1st Talia	
412-424	25
425-427	20
428-436	15
437	20
➥100-page issue	
438-445	28
➥100-page issue	
446	12
447-450	8
451-455	6
456-457	9
458-462	6
463	45
➥1st Calculator	
464	6
465-468	9
469-470	5
471-473	8
474-476	15
477-479	8
480	5
481	7
482	5
483	8
484	5
485-499	4
500	5
501-503	4
504	6
505-523	4
524	5
525-534	4
535	5
536-564	4
565-568	3
569-570	4
571	3
572	4
573-574	3
575	4
576-577	3
578-585	4
586-587	3
588-590	4
591-675	3
675/Variants	4
676	3
677-682	2
682/Variant	3
683-699	2
700/Both	4
701-718	2
719	3
720	4
721-722	3
723-740	2
741	3
742-746	2
747-749	3
750	5
751	12
752-774	3
775	4
776-799	3
800	4
801-816	3
817	12
818-839	3
1000000	4
1M/Variant	15
Ann 1	5
Ann 2	4
Ann 3-7	3
Ann 8	4
Ann 9	3
Ann 10	4

Doctor Strange
MARVEL, 1968

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
169	75
170-171	30
172-173	27
174	20
175	35
176-183	27

Doctor Strange
MARVEL, 1974

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	25
2	18
3-4	10
5-6	8
7	7
8-9	4
10	7
11	6
12-13	4
13/30¢	20
14	3
14/30¢	20
15	3
15/30¢	20
16	3
16/30¢	20
17	3
17/30¢	20
18-23	3
23/35¢	15
24	3
24/35¢	15
25	3
25/35¢	15
26-81	2
Ann 1	6
Special 1	3

Donald Duck
DELL, 1952

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
26	300
27-29	100
30-44	65
45	125
46	175
➥Barks "Secret"	
47-51	65
52	150
53	65
54	125
➥Barks Forbid. Valley	
55-58	50
59-60	125
➥Barks "Ants"	
61-67	40
68	100
➥Barks art	
69-70	40
71-84	30
85-120	25
121-135	20
136-150	15
151-190	10
191-210	5
211-216	3
217	5
218-219	10
220-228	15
229-240	8
241-245	15
246	17
247-249	5
250	8
251-260	4
261-279	3
280-285	2
286	3
287-307	2

Doom Patrol
DC, 1964

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
86	135
87	70
88-90	50
91-98	40
99	60
100	75
101-120	25
121	45
➥Doom Patrol dies	
122-124	2

Eerie
WARREN, 1965

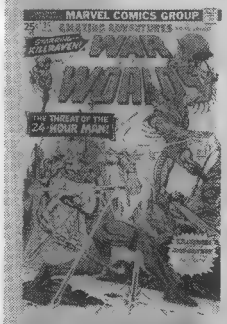
	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	175
2	100
3	40
4-6	30
7-10	28
11-16	18
17	60
➥Scarce	
18-39	18
40	6
41-60	12
61-70	10
71-80	9
81	70
➥Frazetta cover	
82-100	9
101-139	8
YB 1970	36
YB 1971	25
YB 1972	18

80 Page Giant Magazine
DC, 1964

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	295
2	150
3-5	125

RETROVIEW

Amazing Adventures #35 ★★½



"The 24-Hour Man"

In Atlanta, the group encounters an insane woman who has given birth to a being with a one-day lifespan.

One of the stranger stories in the series features a humanoid with the life expectancy of a mayfly who has a symbiotic relationship with an overgrown green worm. Perhaps this is the 21st century's Beany and Cecil?

Don McGregor, Craig Russell, and new artist Keith Giffen present a reasonably straightforward tale for once, but one that feels like a filler between chapters of the greater story.

Reducing the size of the cast last issue was a bold move but a necessary one, as shown this issue.

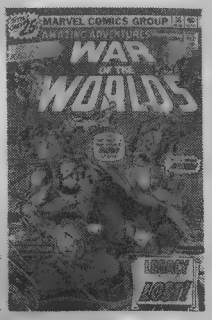
Marvel
Mar 1976 • 18 pp.
Writer: Don McGregor
Pencils: Craig Russell, Keith Giffen
Inks: Jack Abel
Cover: Russell

Best CGC copy: 9.8

Then 25¢ NOW $3

© Marvel

Amazing Adventures #36 ★★★★



© Marvel

Marvel
May 1976 • 17 pp.
Writer: Don McGregor
Pencils: Craig Russell
Sonny Trinidad
Inks: Trinidad
Cover: Russell

"Red Dust Legacy"

While Killraven and his group invade a Martian nursery in Georgia, an old Martian and a younger, Earth-born Martian debate their destiny.

It's about time that the freemen took the fight back to the Martians. Admittedly, it seems wrong that the youngest Martians have to suffer, as Carmilla Frost points out, but the attack is necessary if Earth is to ever be free.

Debating the morality of war was a common theme in the mid-1970s, with Vietnam only recently ended by the time this issue came out. Here, Don McGregor does an outstanding job of presenting arguments from both the humans and the Martians.

CBG copy 9.8 — Then 25¢ NOW $3

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
7	150
8	265
➥Secret Origins	
9-11	125
12-15	80

Eternals
MARVEL, 1976

1	10
1/30¢	25
2	5
2/30¢	15
3-5	3
6-12	2
12/35¢	15
13	2
13/35¢	15
14	2
14/35¢	15
15	2
15/35¢	15
16	2
16/35¢	15
17-19	2
Ann 1	7

Eternal Warrior
VALIANT, 1992

1	4
1/GoldEmboss	25
1/Gold	10
2	3
3	2
4	5
5-7	2
8	3
9-21	1
22	2
23-25	1
26	4
27	1
27/VVSS	125
28-29	1
30-40	2
41-45	3
46-49	4
50	7
Special 1	4
YB 1-YB 2	5

Famous First Edition
DC, 1974

F-4	15
➥Whiz #2	
F-5	13
➥Batman #1	
F-6	10
➥W. Woman #1	
F-7	12
➥All-Star #3	
F-8	9
➥Flash #1	
C-26	10
➥Action #1	
C-28	9
➥Detective #27	
C-30	10
➥Sensation #1	
C-61	9
➥Superman #1	

Fantastic Four
MARVEL, 1961

1	20000
➥1st Fantastic Four	
1/Golden	70
2	4500
➥1st Skrulls	
3	3000
4	3500
5	5000
➥1st Dr. Doom	
6	2000
7	1250
8	1200
9-10	1150
11	1000
12	2700
➥Thing vs. Hulk	
13	600
14	500
15	700
16-19	500
20	600
21	450
22-23	250
24	240
25	550
26	600
➥Avengers app.	
27	300
28	500
➥X-Men app.	
29-31	260
32-34	250
35-40	165
41-43	110
44	85
45	325
➥1st Inhumans	
46	150
47	100
48	460
➥1st Silver Surfer	
49	350
50	400
51	150
52	300
➥1st Black Panther	
53	140
54	105
55	210
➥Thing vs. Surfer	
56	100
57	115
58	90
59	60
60	65
61	70
62-63	60
64	50
65	55
66	115
➥1st Warlock	
67	105
68-69	60
70	55
71	45
72	100
➥Silver Surfer app.	
73	80
74	85
75	55
76	45
77	50
78	35
79	50
80-85	40
86	50
87	40
88-89	35
90-93	30
94	40
95-96	30
97-98	25
99	30
100	70
101-105	30
106	22
107	30
108	22
109-111	20
112	175
➥Thing vs. Hulk	
113	25
114	27
115	25
116	65
➥52 pages	
117-120	15
121	30
➥Galactus app.	
122	45
123	27
124-125	20
126	30
127	35
128	30
129	25
130-132	15
133-145	12
146	10
147	15
148-154	10
155	15
156-158	12
159-163	10
164	9
165	7
166	10
167	15
168-169	10
169/30¢	20
170	10
170/30¢	20
171	6
171/30¢	20
172	6
172/30¢	20
173	6
173/30¢	20
174-183	6
183/35¢	15
184	6
184/35¢	15
185	5
185/35¢	15
186	5
186/35¢	15
187	5
187/35¢	15
188-200	5
➥Byrne script/art begins	
201-239	4
240-248	3
249	4
250	5
251	4
252-255	3
256	4
257-259	3
260	5
261	4
262-268	3
269	4
270	3
271	4
272	5
273-286	3
287-295	2
296	3
297-299	2
300	3
301-318	2
319	3
320-346	2
347-350	3
351-357	2
358	3
359-370	2
371	3
372-374	1
375	3
376-378	1
379-380	2
381	3
Ann 12-14	5
Ann 15-27	3
Special 1	2
Ashcan 1	1

Fantastic Four
MARVEL, 1998

1	3
1/A	4
2-5	3
6-24	2
25	3
26-34	2
35	3
36-49	2
50-51	4
52	2
53	3
54	4
55-59	2
60	1
61-70	2
Ann 1998	5
Ann 1999	4
Ann 2001	3

Fantasy Masterpieces
MARVEL, 1966

1	75
2	35
3	30
4-8	18
9	30
➥Torch origin	
10	10
11	15

Fear
MARVEL, 1970

1	95
2	30
3-4	15
5	20
6-9	15
10	35
➥Man-Thing starts	
11	18
12	12
13-14	9
15-17	12
18	9
19	25
➥1st Howard Duck	
20	20
➥Morbius begins	
21	9
22	7
23	8
24	12
➥Blade app.	
25	8
26-29	7
30	12
31	7

Felix the Cat
DELL, 1948

1	315
2	145
3	100
4-5	85
6-10	70
11-20	60
21-30	85
31	45
32-33	75
34-35	45
36	75
37	225
38-40	75
41	60
42-51	55
52-61	48
Ann 1	200
Ann 2	165

Fightin' 5
CHARLTON, 1964

28	20
29-30	10
31-39	9
40	18
➥1st Peacemaker	
41	10
42-49	3

1st Issue Special
DC, 1975

1	7
2	5
3-5	4
7	5
8	15
➥Warlord	
9-12	4
13	5

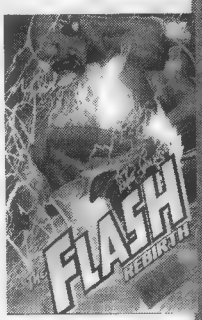
Flash
DC, 1959

105	6500
106	2000
107	1000
108	850
109	650
110	1500
➥1st Kid Flash	
111	450
112	600
➥1st Elong. Man	
113	550
114	275
115	350
116	250
117	300
118-120	250
121-122	200
123	1500
➥1st Earth-2	
124-128	150
129	325
➥GA Flash app.	
130	150
131-136	125
137	475
➥GA Flash app	
138-140	125
141-142	150
143	125
144-150	100
151	80
152-153	65
154-158	60
159	75
160	90
➥Giant-size	
161-164	50
165	70
166-167	50
168	95
169	70
➥Origin of Flash	
170-174	50
175	175
➥Race w/Superman	
176-179	40
180	50
181-183	35
184	50
185-186	35
187	65
188-191	35
192-193	25
194	40
195	25

CBG Trendwatcher

John Tinkess, Another Dimension

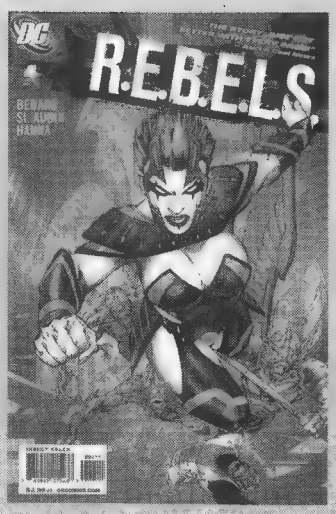
Our DC sales rebounded nicely in April, with *Flash Rebirth* #1 being our top-selling issue. In fact, DC took six of our Top 10 spots in April, thanks to strong sales for *Batman Battle for the Cowl*, the Neil Gaiman Batman story, and the ever-growing sales of the Green Lantern books as they continue the countdown toward "Blackest Night." *Wolverine: Weapon X* had a strong start for Marvel, and the Avengers titles, *Thor*, and *Captain America* rounded out our best-seller list. *Incognito* enjoyed another bump in sales with the release of the third issue. Ed Brubaker's *noir* super-hero series has been showing steady gains each month.



While the core titles and event series by name creators continue to sell well, we are seeing more and more regulars trimming their pull lists, and it is usually such mid-tier sellers as *Booster Gold* or *Iron Fist* that take the hit. Between recent price increases, the continuing proliferation of too many new titles, and a rough economy, our customers are finding it hard to keep up and are making difficult choices.

Of course, the best way to combat rising prices is to get comics free, and the incredible turnout we saw for this year's Free Comic Book Day was testament to the growing demand we still see for comics in general. The store opened at 10 a.m., and there were several dozen eager fans waiting outside when we unlocked the doors. After the initial rush, the crowds remained steady all day, and in the end we had given away thousands of free comic books and also had the second highest sales day in our history (just missing our FCBD 2007 total). The weekend prior to FCBD, we also took part in a local convention — the Calgary Comic & Entertainment Expo — which set a new attendance record with more than 10,000 guests. It has been a long and tiring couple of weeks but, at the same time, gratifying to see such strong interest in comics from so many people.

John Tinkess *runs* ***Another Dimension*** *in Calgary, Alberta. He can be reached at* ***comics@another-dimension.com*** *or* ***(403) 283-7078.***



R.E.B.E.L.S. #4
DC

$2.99, color, 32 pgs.
Writer: Tony Bedard
Artists: Claude St. Aubin, Scott Hanna
reviewed by **Mart Gray**
★★★

Vril Dox, aka manipulative genius Brainiac 2, is gathering a group of operatives to take back his corrupted interstellar police force, L.E.G.I.O.N., while cosmic heroes The Omega Men try to survive an invasion by drones of old Justice League foe Starro.

We're four issues in and the momentum of this '90s revival shows no signs of flagging. Writer Tony Bedard juggles a large cast of characters with aplomb, choreographing the action with ease while ensuring everyone gets a personality. This is a man who knows DC's space lanes like the back of his hand and he's an entertaining guide, making a complex storyline accessible at every stage.

Claude St. Aubin fills in for Andy Clarke this month and, inked by Scott Hanna, does a creditable job, though odd moments, such as a space splattering by a Khund commander, are undersold.

José Villarrubia's colors pop, ensuring the multicolored cast doesn't fade into a rainbow blur, and letterer Steve Wands dips into a wide library of fonts for the span of species. These are R.E.B.E.L.S. worth getting behind.

www.dccomics.com

Flash
CONTINUED

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
196	40
197-200	25
201-202	20
203	25
204	20
205	35
206	20
207-212	17
213	25
214	40
215	35
216-219	17
220-228	15
229	30
230-231	15
232	30
➥100-page issue	
233-237	10
238-245	7
246	12
247-262	7
263-273	4
274	5
275	7
276-288	4
289	5
290-299	3
300	5
301-349	3
350	7
Ann 1	400

Fury of Firestorm
DC, 1982

1	6
2-10	2
11-61	1
61/A	10
62-64	1
Ann 1-4	2

Ghost Rider
MARVEL, 1973

1	130
2	37
3-4	25
5	23
6-14	15
15-16	12
17-19	10
17-19/30¢	20
20	10
21-23	7
24-26	8
24-26/35¢	15
27-30	7
31-49	6
50	12
51-80	4
81	10

Ghosts
DC, 1971

1	100
2	35
3-5	17
6-10	12
11-20	10
21-30	6
31-39	5
40	6
41-50	5
51-112	4

Giant-Size Spider-Man
MARVEL, 1974

1	35
2-3	12
4	45
5	12
6	15

Giant-Size X-Men
MARVEL, 1975

1	800
➥1st new X-Men	
2	80
3-4	5

G.I. Combat
DC, 1957

44	500
45	300
46	250
47	225
48-50	100
51-54	85
55	125
56-60	85
61-66	70
67	125
➥1st Tank Killer	
68	400
69-86	70
87	300
➥1st Haunted Tank	
88-100	55
101-110	45
111-113	38
114	75
➥Haunted Tank origin	
115-120	28
121-140	22
141-145	8
146-150	10
151-160	8
161-180	7
181-200	5
201-250	4
251-288	3

G.I. Joe, A Real American Hero
MARVEL, 1982

1	14
2	8
3-9	4
10	6
11-13	4
14	5
15-18	4
19	6
20	4
21	15
➥Silent issue	
22-55	4
56	5
57	3
58	4
59-151	3
152-154	7
155	16
➥Low circulation	
YB 1	3
YB 2-4	2
Special 1	20

Green Arrow
DC, 1988

0	3
1	4
2-20	2
21	3
22-49	2
50	3
51-74	2
75	3
76-95	2
96-99	3
100	7
101	18
➥Death of O. Queen	
102-124	2
125	4
126-136	3
137	4
1000000	3
Ann 1-7	4

Green Arrow
DC, 2001

1-2	6
3-42	3
43	7
➥Speedy HIV	
44	4
45-49	3
50	4
51-75	3

Green Lantern
DC, 1960

1	4500
➥1st Guardians	
2	1000
3	600
4-5	450
6	400
7-10	300
11-12	200
13	250
14-16	175
17-20	150
21-27	125
28-30	100
31-39	75
40	350
➥GA Lantern app.	
41-49	75
50-51	60
52	80
53-58	55
59	125
➥1st Guy Gardner	
60-75	50
76	375
➥Green Arrow starts	
77-78	75
79-84	60
85	50
86	60
➥Drug issue	
87	50
88	30
89	45
90-92	10
93-99	9
100	10
101	9
102-111	4
112	8
113-115	3
116	8
117-121	3
122	4
123	6
124-130	3
131-135	2
136-139	3
140	2
141	5
➥1st Omega Men	
142-144	3
145-149	2
150	5
151-173	2
174	3
175-178	2
179	3
180-193	2
194	3
195	4
196-205	2
Special 1-2	3

Haunt of Fear
E.C., 1950

1	2750
2-3	1000
4	750
5	550
6	425
7-9	400
10	375
11-13	300
14	450
15-18	300
19	375
20	300
21-28	250

Hawkman
DC, 1964

1	475
2	200
3	75
4	200
➥1st Zatanna	
5-9	65
10-12	50
13-15	40
16-19	36
20-27	32

Herbie
ACG, 1964

1	95
2	60
3-5	48
6-7	40
8	50
9-10	38
11-23	30

House of Mystery
DC, 1951

1	2000
2	850
3	600
4-5	450
6-10	350
11-15	300
16-25	220
26-35	170
36-50	140
51-61	95
62	70
63	85
64	70
65	85
66-69	70
70	85
71-75	65
76	85
77-79	65
80-83	54
84-85	85
86-99	54
100	65
101-116	45
117-119	35
120	45
121-130	28
131-142	22
143	175
➥J'onn J'onzz starts	
144	75
145-155	50
156	75
➥1st Robby Reed	
157-159	50
160	90
➥1st S.A. Plastic Man	
161	35
162-173	32
174	50
175	45
176-177	24
178	45
➥N. Adams art	
179	60
➥1st Wrightson art	
180-181	25
182	18
183	25
184	18
185	30
186	75
➥Wrightson art	
187	20
188	30
189-190	20
191	25
192	20
193	25
194	30
195	45
➥Wrightson	
196-201	20
202-203	14
204	20
205-206	12
207	40
➥Wrightson art	
208	12
209-213	10
214-220	6
221	12
222-223	6
224	35
225-226	18
227	27
228-229	18
230-250	5
251-259	4
260-321	3

House of Secrets
DC, 1956

1	1500
2	550
3	450
4	350
5-7	200
8	230
9-12	200
13-15	125
16-20	110
21	85
22	80
23	100
➥1st Mark Merlin	
24-30	80
31-50	65
51-60	52
61	125
➥1st Eclipso	
62	60
63-65	50
66	65
➥Eclipso cover	
67	40
68-79	36
80	45
81	55
➥1st Abel	
82-84	20
85	32
86	20
87	45
➥Wrightson art	
88-91	40
92	450
➥1st Swamp Thing	
93-99	25
100	27
101-112	18
113-141	10
142-154	7

Incredible Hulk
MARVEL, 1962

-1	2
1	13000
➥1st Hulk	
2	3500
3	2000
4-5	1750
6	2250
102	150
103	100
104	75
105	70
106-112	50
113-115	40

RETROVIEW

Marvel Team-Up #45 ★★★

Marvel
May 1976 • 17 pp.
Writer: Bill Mantlo
Pencils: Sal Buscema
Inks: Mike Esposito
Cover: Gil Kane

"Future Shock!"

On his way back to 1976 from an adventure in colonial-era America, Spider-Man is sidetracked to the 21st century, where he encounters Killraven.

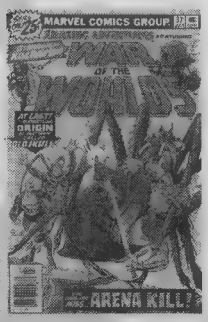
While *Marvel Team-Up* eventually became "Trademark Renewal Theater" for the most part, here is an early example of using the series as a promotional tool. Having Spider-Man visit Killraven's time and participate in a one-off adventure should pique the interest of at least a few readers who will seek out the next issue of *Amazing Adventures*, coincidentally on sale at about the same time.

Unfortunately, that series only has a few more issues to run.

© Marvel

Near CGC copy 9.8 Then 25¢ NOW $5

Amazing Adventures #37 ★★★½



© Marvel

Marvel
Jul 1976 • 17 pp.
Writer: Don McGregor
Pencils: Craig Russell
Inks: Jack Abel
Cover: Russell

"Arena Kill!"

As Killraven tries to tell an adventurous tale to a group of Florida freemen, Old Skull interrupts with his own origin story.

Giant, bald, and simple, Old Skull could be taken for comic relief throughout the series, but here Don McGregor gives the mentally challenged character his due.

As his name implies, Old Skull has more years under his belt than the other members of Killraven's band and remembers Earth before the Martian invasion, although more or less in his own way. The story is endearing and shows that Old Skull is a character to be reckoned with in more ways than one.

CBG copy: 9.6 Then 25¢ NOW $3

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
116-121	35
122	55
➥Thing vs. Hulk	
123-125	30
126-130	25
131	30
132	25
133	20
134-136	16
137-151	20
152	25
153-160	20
161	30
162	55
➥1st Wendigo	
163-171	15
172	25
➥X-Men app.	
173-176	15
177-178	17
179	16
180	180
➥Wolverine cameo	
181	750
➥1st Wolverine story	
181/Ace	5
182	100
➥2nd Wolverine	
183	12
184-190	10
191-198	8
198/30¢	20
199	8
199/30¢	20
200	11
200/30¢	30
201	7
201/30¢	20
202	7
202/30¢	20
203-212	7
212/35¢	15
213	7
213/35¢	15
214	7
214/35¢	15
215	7
215/35¢	15
216	7
216/35¢	15
217-218	7
219-240	5
241-249	4
250	7
251-285	3
286	4
287-295	3
296	5
297	4
298-299	3
300	4
301-319	3

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
320-323	2
324	5
325	3
326	4
327-328	3
329	2
➥1st McFarlane	
330-334	5
335	2
336-339	3
340	14
➥vs. Wolverine	
341	4
342-349	2
350	5
➥1st Dale Keown	
351-371	2
372	3
373-376	2
377-378	3
379-384	2
385	4
386	3
387-391	2
392	3
393	4
394	3
395-399	2
400	3
401-418	2
418/Variant	3
419-425	2
425/Variant	4
426-448	2
449	8
450	5
451-474	2
Ann 1	115
Ann 2	40
Ann 3-4	25
Ann 5	9
Ann 6	7
Ann 7	9
Ann 8	5
Ann 9	3
Ann 10	4
Ann 11-19	3
Ann 20	4
Ann '97-'98	3
Ashcan 1	1

Iron Fist
MARVEL, 1975

1	35
2	12
3	10
4	8
4/30¢	20
5	8
5/30¢	20
6	8
6/30¢	20

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
7-13	8
13/35¢	10
14	80
➥1st Sabretooth	
14/35¢	150
15	27
15/35¢	75

Ironjaw
ATLAS-SEABOARD, 1975

1	9
2-3	6
4	8

Iron Man
MARVEL, 1968

1	365
2	75
3-4	60
5	55
6-7	50
8	40
9	90
10	42
11-12	35
13-17	27
18-20	25
21-30	20
31-40	15
41-42	12
43	35
➥1st Guardsman	
44	12
45-46	15
47	35
➥Barry Smith art	
48-50	12
51	17
52-53	10
54	16
55	110
➥1st Thanos	
56-67	15
68-97	10
85-89/30¢	20
98-99	8
99/35¢	15
100	12
100/35¢	18
101	7
101/35¢	12
102	7
102/35¢	12
103	7
103/35¢	12
➥Alcoholism issue	
104-129	7
130-149	5
150	7
151-153	5
154	7
155-159	5

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
160	7
161-170	5
171-181	3
182	4
183-185	3
186	4
187-191	3
192	4
193-200	3
201-224	2
225-232/A	3
233-243	2
244	3
245-250	2
251-257	1
258-280	2
281-282	3
283-284	2
285-287	1
288	3
289	1
290	4
291-299	1
300	3
300/Variant	4
301-304	1
305-310	2
310/CS	3
311-316	2
317	3
318-324	2
325	3
326-332	2
Ann 1	27
Ann 2	20
Ann 3	10
Ann 4	4
Ann 5-10	3
Ann 11-13	2
Ann 14-15	3
Ashcan 1	2

Iron Man & Sub-Mariner
MARVEL, 1968

1	100

JLA
DC, 1997

1	6
2-6	4
7-15	3
16-40	2
41	3
42-49	2
50	4
51-74	2
75	4
76-99	2
100	4
101-108	3
➥Post ID Crisis	

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
109-114	2
115	12
➥ID Crisis follow-up	
116	5
117-125	3
1000000	2
Ann 1	6
Ann 2	5
Ann 3	4
GS 1-2	5
GS 3	6

Joker
DC, 1975

1	16
2	12
3-5	8
6-9	7

Jonah Hex
DC, 1977

1	28
2	10
3-5	7
6	6
7-8	7
9-10	5
11-20	4
21-92	3

Journey into Mystery
MARVEL, 1952

-1	2
1	3100
2	950
3-4	700
5	800
6-11	450
12-22	350
23-32	225
33	250
34-40	225
41-49	200
50	160
51-61	155
62	250
63-71	145
72	140
73	200
74-81	140
82	160
83	4500
➥1st Thor	
83/Golden	60
84	725
85	450
86	400
87	600
88	250
89	300
90	150
91-92	130
93	160
94-96	130
97	325
98	120
99	105
100	115

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
101	150
102-108	75
109	90
110-111	75
112	210
➥Thor vs. Hulk	
113-114	75
115	90
116	75
117-125	70
503-521	2
Ann 1	150

JSA
DC, 1999

1	5
2-36	3
37	4
38-49	3
50	4
51-57	3
58	4
59-66	3
67	7
➥Identity Crisis tie	
68	5
69-70	4
71	3
72	4
73	5
➥Inf. Crisis tie	
74	4
➥Inf. Crisis tie	
75-87	3

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
Ann 1	5

Justice League of America
CONTINUED

21	350
➥Earth-2 visit	
22	325
23-30	150
31	100
32-33	90
34-36	75
➥Supes vs. Cap. Mrv.	
37-39	125
40-41	75
42-45	60
➥1st SA Sandman	
46	110
➥JSA app.	
47	95
48	140
➥Giant issue	
49-52	60
53-54	55
55	115
56	100
➥JSA team-up	
57-62	55
63-66	45
67	60
➥Giant	
68	50
69-72	45

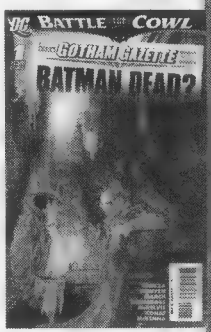
UNSLABBED Near Mint	
➥Giant	
73-81	35
82	45
➥G.A. Batman app.	
83-84	30
85	40
➥Giant	
86-90	25
91	35
92	32
93	25
➥Giant	
94	60
➥Sandman origin	
95-99	20
100	65
101-106	20
107-108	25
109	20
110-116	25
117-125	15
126-136	10
137	20
138-150	7
151-165	5
166-167	12
168	25
➥Mindwipe story	
169-199	5
200	7
201-217	3
218	4
219	3
220	4

CBG Trendwatcher

Michael Tinnel, Autobot City Comics & Toys

With April of last year being my second month of business, I was hesitant about this April, but I can say that, with one year under my belt, good reserve-list stock, and dedicated customers, I've been happily surprised.

In April, DC started to show serious improvement with new series since *Final Crisis* is finally over. *Flash: Rebirth* made its way to the shelf, and the issues left the shelf as if The Scarlet Speedster himself were grabbing them. Geoff Johns has brought an exciting, interesting story to this return of Barry Allen. Other big sales from DC include Batman's *Battle for the Cowl* and all related tie-ins. At first, some of my customers just wanted the main line but, with more and more one-shots coming out, they are picking them all up. Also, "Prelude to Blackest Night" has lived up to its expectations, with sales continuing to soar upward for *Green Lantern* and *Green Lantern Corps.* This is getting customers ready and hyped for "Blackest Night," which starts in July. Sales continue to be good and steady with *Justice League of America* and *Justice Society of America*, but sales have declined for *Strange Adventures* and the newest reboot of *Warlord.*



Marvel's sales have increased with Brian Michael Bendis' *Dark Avengers.* Also on the "Dark Reign" sellout list were *Elektra, Fantastic Four*, and *Hawkeye.* If it had a "Dark Reign" tie-in, customers were asking for it. Some of my customers who bought *Marvel Zombies 3* did not sign up for *Marvel Zombies 4*, but, after reading the first issue, I think they're making a big mistake by not picking it up. Customers were preparing themselves for *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* with such releases as the Wolverine books, *X-Men Legacy, Uncanny X-Men*, and tie-ins to the "Messiah War" event. However, sales were disappointing for the newest reboot of *Exiles*, which, in my opinion, is a good story, but people are tied of reboots. Sales were also down for *Thor* #601, which probably wouldn't have happened, if the issue had been released on schedule.

IDW continues to surprise everyone with all three of its *G.I. Joe* titles, which sell out every issue for me. IDW's *Transformers* books also continue to do well.

Dark Horse's sales continued to do well this month with such titles as *Buffy, Conan*, and the *Star Wars*-related books.

Michael Tinnel *runs* ***Autobot City Comics & Toys*** *in* ***Benton, Ark.***
He can be reached at ***AutobotCityComics@yahoo.com*** *or (501) 778-4440.*
Check out his website at ***www.autobotcitycomics.webs.com.***

Sherlock Holmes #1
Dynamite Entertainment

$3.50, color, 32 pgs.; Writers: Leah Moore, John Reppion; Artist: Aaron Campbell

reviewed by **Ray Sidman**

★★★

It's been a long wait for another title with the Holmes-ian flavor since CrossGen's *Ruse* years ago. (More recently, there was AiT's collected edition of Omaha Perez's *Holmes*, but it has an entirely different feel.) Thus far, results satisfy, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's legendary detective has a sound home in the hands of Leah Moore, John Reppion, and Aaron Campbell.

It's October 1895, and criminal activity in London's East End have compelled Holmes and his stalwart compatriot Dr. Watson to join the case. Intrigue, devilry, and derring-do are requisite elements of the Holmes genre, and Dynamite's series has that in spades. Of course, as it is a detective book, there's lots of dialogue with action sequences bookending this issue's story. Despite the heavy reliance on dialogue, it's enjoyable dialogue and should keep most readers interested.

The colors and shadowy art give the book the appropriate feel for the miasma of Holmes' London. Even if you've not read a word of Doyle, this latest incarnation of Sherlock Holmes is worth checking out. Hopefully it's a series with a long future.

www.dynamite entertainment.com

Justice League of America
CONTINUED

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
221-226	3
227	4
228-260	3
261	4
Ann 1	5
Ann 2-3	4

Kingdom Come
DC, 1996

1-4	5

Limited Collectors' Edition
DC, 1973

C-20	32
➥Rudolph	
C-21	16
C-22	14
C-23	16
C-24	26
➥Rudolph	
C-25	28
➥Batman	
C-27	16
C-29	10
C-31	15
C-32	10
C-33	16
C-34	12
C-35	10
C-36	16
C-37	20
➥Batman	
C-38-C-39	10
C-40	12
C-41-C-43	10
C-44	12
C-45-C-47	10
C-48	12
C-49-C-50	10
C-51	12
C-52	10
C-57-C-59	14

Little Lulu
DELL, 1948

1	600
2	300
3	225
4-5	200
6-10	165
11-20	125
21-30	105
31-38	90
39	125
40	90
41-50	70
51-60	60
61-70	55
71-80	45
81-90	40
91-99	35
100	50
101-120	30
121-140	28
141-160	25
161-164	20
➥...In Paris	
165-166	70
➥Christmas Diary	
167-180	20
181-200	15
201-220	9
221-240	6
241-250	4
251-257	3
258-259	12
260	325
➥Sold only in packs	
261	45
➥Sold only in packs	
262-265	12
➥Sold only in packs	
266-268	15
➥Sold only in packs	

Machine Man
MARVEL, 1978

1	3
2-18	2
➥Alpha Flight app.	
19	13
➥1st Jack O'Lantern	

Mad
E.C., 1952

1	5000
2	1250
3	725
4	700
5	1200
➥Low distribution	
6-11	525
12-19	425
20-23	300
24	785
➥1st magazine issue	
25	300
26-27	250
28-29	225
30	350
31	200
32	175
33	165
34-35	140
36-40	110
41-50	80
51-60	60
61-70	48
71-80	36
81-100	32
101-120	18
121	22
122	18
123-140	15
141-150	12
151-160	9
161-170	8
171-189	7
190-200	5
201-220	4
221-260	3
261-342	2
343-417	3
418-500	4

Magnus, Robot Fighter
GOLD KEY, 1963

1	200
2-3	125
4-10	60
11-20	35
21-28	20
29-45	10
45/Whitman	18
46	10

Magnus Robot Fighter
VALIANT, 1991

0/card	40
0/no card	30
1	10
2	8
3-4	5
➥Flip-book w/Rai #1	
5-6	6
7-8	4
9-10	3
11	6
12	20
➥1st Valiant Turok	
13-16	3
17-21	2
21/Gold	20
22-25	2
25/VVSS	15
26-35	1
36	2
37-43	1
44	3
45-54	2
55-57	3
57/error	10
58-60	3
61-62	4
63	5
64	12
YB 1	5

Marvel and DC Present
MARVEL, 1982

1	12

Marvel Collectors' Item Classics
MARVEL, 1966

1	125
2	70
3-4	45
5-6	30
7-10	15
11-20	12
21	15
22	17
23	20

Marvel Family
FAWCETT, 1945

1	1100
2	525
3	425
4-5	315
6-10	265
11-20	200
21-30	165
31-40	135
41-70	100
71-81	85
82-89	75

Marvel Feature
MARVEL, 1971

1	125
2	60
3	30
4	25
5-10	10
11	55
➥Thing vs. Hulk	
12	35

Marvel Mystery Comics
MARVEL, 1939

2	30000
3	15000
4	12500
5	22500
6-7	7500
8	10000
9	25000
10	8000
11	3800
12	4000
13	5000
14-17	2500
18	2250
19-20	2500
21	2000
22-25	1700
26-30	1475
31-41	1325
42-48	1125
49	1450
50	1125
51-67	1000
68-78	860
79	810
80	1275
81	975
82	2250
83	810
84	1250
85	810
86	890
87	785
88-91	950
92	2500

Marvel's Greatest Comics
MARVEL, 1969

➥Was Marvel Collector's Item Classics	
23-34	15
35-37	10
38-50	4
51-63	3
63/30¢	20
64	3
64/30¢	20
65-70	3
71	2
71/35¢	15
72	2
72/35¢	15
73	2
73/35¢	15
74-96	2

Marvel Spotlight
MARVEL, 1971

1	25
2	130
3-4	30
5	275
➥1st Ghost Rider	
6	45
7	35
8	25
9	30
10	35
11-12	22
13	12
14-15	10
16-19	7
20-21	5
22	6
23-24	5
25-27	3
27/30¢	20
28	10
28/30¢	18
29	9
29/30¢	15
30-31	3
32	50
➥1st Spider-Woman	
33	3

Marvel Super-Heroes
MARVEL, 1966

12	95
➥1st Captain Mar-vell; was Fant. M'pieces	
13	50
14	75
➥Reprints 1st Kirby	
15	42
16	25
17	30
18	40
➥1st Guardians	
19	20
20	35
21-27	12
28-30	10
31	20
32	6
33-38	5
39-45	4
46-57	3
57/30¢	20
58	3
58/30¢	20
59-65	3
65/35¢	15
66	3
66/35¢	15
67-80	3
81-105	2
Special 1	40

Marvel Super Heroes Secret Wars
MARVEL, 1984

1	4
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	3
6	4
7	3
8	15
9-10	2
11	3
12	2

Marvel Super Special
MARVEL, 1977

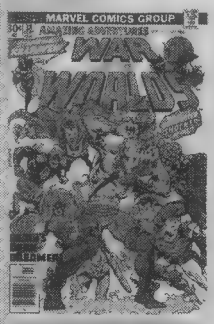
1	85
➥Kiss	
2-3	8
4	30
➥Beatles	
5	55
➥Kiss	
6-9	7
10	6
11-15	5
16	7
17-41	4

Marvel Tales
MARVEL, 1964

1	175
2	85
3	45
4-5	30
6-9	25
10	30
11-16	25
17-21	20
22-32	15
33-44	12
45-66	10
66/30¢	20
67	10
67/30¢	20
68	10
68/30¢	20
69	10
69/30¢	20
70	10
70/30¢	20
71	10
72-80	7
80/35¢	18
81	7
81/35¢	15
82	7
82/35¢	15
83	7
83/35¢	15
84	7
84/35¢	15
85	7
86-122	5
123-136	4
137	7
138-144	5

RETROVIEW

Amazing Adventures #38 ★★★



"Death's Dark Dreamer!"

Killraven is drawn into a holographic entertainment center outside Miami where he encounters strangely twisted versions of various heroes.

Don McGregor and Craig Russell needed another breather to complete "Mourning Prey," so for the second time in less than a year, a fill-in issue took up the slack. It's a bizarre story, but not bad overall; however, a new reader would be hopelessly lost.

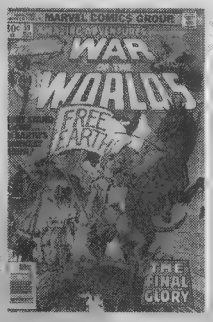
Last issue, readers were told that Killraven and his band became lost on their way to Yellowstone Park. Now, Killraven is outside Miami. Did the Martians destroy all the compasses and maps? Certainly, some survivors would know the way.

Marvel
Sep 1976 • 17 pp.
Writer: Bill Mantlo
Pencils: Keith Giffen
Inks: Al Milgrom
Cover: Keith Pollard

© Marvel

Just CGC copy: **9.8** **Then 30¢ NOW $3**

Amazing Adventures #39 ★★★★



© Marvel

Marvel
Nov 1976 • 17 pp.
Writer: Don McGregor
Pencils: Craig Russell
Inks: Russell
Cover: Russell

"The Morning after Mourning Prey"

In their final *Amazing Adventures* outing, Killraven and his team face a humanoid butterfly in the Okefenokee Swamp.

It took an extra two months to arrive, but this is one of Don McGregor and Craig Russell's best pieces to date. It's a shame that it was also the final issue of the series, but poor sales, a bimonthly schedule, and two fill-in issues out of six total for a year will do that.

With the cancellation, readers were left hanging as to the fate of Killraven's brother, of whom they had one brief glimpse, as well as what would happen to the conquered Earth.

CGC copy: 9.8 — Then 30¢ NOW $3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Marvel Team-Up
MARVEL, 1972
1 ... 185
2 ... 30
3 ... 25
4 ... 45
➥X-Men app.
5 ... 18
6-10 ... 16
11 ... 13
12 ... 18
➥Werewolf app.
13-20 ... 13
21-31 ... 8
32-44 ... 5
44/30¢ ... 20
45 ... 5
45/30¢ ... 20
46 ... 5
46/30¢ ... 20
47 ... 4
47/30¢ ... 20
48 ... 4
48/30¢ ... 20
49-52 ... 4
53 ... 15
➥X-Men app.
54-58 ... 4
58/35¢ ... 15
59 ... 4
59/35¢ ... 15
60 ... 4
60/35¢ ... 15
61 ... 4
61/35¢ ... 15
62 ... 4
62/35¢ ... 15
63-65 ... 4
66 ... 7
➥Captain Britain app.
67-94 ... 4
95-99 ... 3
100 ... 6
101-136 ... 3
137 ... 4
138-143 ... 3
144 ... 4
145-150 ... 3
Ann 1 ... 30
Ann 2 ... 6
Ann 3 ... 4
Ann 4-6 ... 3
Ann 7 ... 2

Marvel Zombies
MARVEL, 2006
1 ... 55
1/2nd ... 35
1/3rd ... 12
2 ... 16
3 ... 6
3/2nd ... 4
4-5 ... 3

Marvel Zombies vs. Army of Darkness
MARVEL, 2007
1 ... 5
1/2nd-5 ... 3

Men in Black
AIRCEL, 1990
1 ... 15
2 ... 10
3 ... 8

Metal Men
DC, 1963
1 ... 500
2 ... 225
3-5 ... 150
6-10 ... 80
11-20 ... 55
21-26 ... 45
27 ... 80
➥Metal Men
28-30 ... 42
31-41 ... 24
42-44 ... 12
45-56 ... 6

Mickey Mouse
DELL, 1953
28-30 ... 40
31-35 ... 30
36-40 ... 25
41-50 ... 20
51-60 ... 16
61-70 ... 15
71-80 ... 14
81-100 ... 12
101-120 ... 11
121-140 ... 10
141-160 ... 8
161-180 ... 7
181-200 ... 6
201-203 ... 5
204 ... 8
205-206 ... 5
207 ... 20
208 ... 50
209 ... 20
210-214 ... 7
215-218 ... 10
219 ... 12
220 ... 4
221-240 ... 3
241-256 ... 2

Mickey Mouse and Friends
GEMSTONE, 2003
257-284 ... 3

Mighty Samson
GOLD KEY, 1964
1 ... 75
2-4 ... 45
5-10 ... 30
11-20 ... 20
21-31 ... 15
32 ... 10

My Greatest Adventure
DC, 1955
1 ... 1250
2 ... 600
3-4 ... 425
5-10 ... 325
11-14 ... 200
15-17 ... 250
18 ... 300
19 ... 200
20-21 ... 225
22-27 ... 175
28 ... 200
29-30 ... 150
31-40 ... 125
41-61 ... 100
62-79 ... 75
80 ... 425
➥1st Doom Patrol
81-85 ... 150

Mystery in Space
DC, 1951
1 ... 3000
2 ... 1250
3 ... 900
4-5 ... 700
6-10 ... 600
11-15 ... 400
16-25 ... 320
26-40 ... 235
41-52 ... 195
53 ... 1500
➥Adam Strange starts
54 ... 425
55 ... 250
56-60 ... 175
61-71 ... 125
72-74 ... 100
75 ... 225
76-80 ... 100
81-86 ... 75
87 ... 175
➥Hawkman app.
88-90 ... 90
➥Hawkman app.
91-93 ... 50
94-103 ... 40
104-110 ... 30
111-117 ... 5

New Avengers
MARVEL, 2005
0/Military ... 10
➥U.S. troops promo
1 ... 7
1/Retailer ed. ... 70
➥Spider-Man cover
1/DirCut ... 5
1/Quesada ... 12
1/Finch ... 9
1/2nd ... 3
2 ... 2
2/Hairsine ... 45
3 ... 2
3/Wolverine ... 45
4 ... 3
4/Cheung ... 15
4/DF ... 20
5 ... 2
5/Granov ... 15
6 ... 2
6/Hitch ... 15
7 ... 8
7/Adams ... 25
8 ... 3
8/Romita ... 20
9 ... 3
9/Trimpe ... 15
10-33 ... 3
34-37 ... 6
38-50 ... 4
Ann 1 ... 4

Not Brand Echh
MARVEL, 1967
1 ... 45
2 ... 18
3-5 ... 15
6-8 ... 10
➥Giant issues start
9-13 ... 25

Nova
MARVEL, 1976
1 ... 8
2 ... 4
3-25 ... 3
10-14/35¢ ... 15
126 ... 100
127 ... 75
128 ... 275
➥Sgt. Rock Origin
129-133 ... 75
134-137 ... 60
138-150 ... 50
151 ... 350
➥1st Enemy Ace
152 ... 50
153 ... 140
➥2nd Enemy Ace
154 ... 40
155 ... 75
➥3rd Enemy Ace
156-157 ... 40
158 ... 60
159-163 ... 40
164 ... 80
➥Giant-sized
165-167 ... 40
168 ... 90
➥1st Unknown Soldier
169-176 ... 30
177 ... 50
178-181 ... 30
182-183 ... 40
184-185 ... 30
186 ... 40
187-189 ... 30
190 ... 40
191-198 ... 25
199-202 ... 20
203 ... 35
➥Giant
204-215 ... 20
216 ... 55
➥Giant-sized
217-228 ... 15
229 ... 35
➥Giant-sized
230-234 ... 15
235-240 ... 25
241 ... 15
242 ... 20
243-253 ... 15
254 ... 18
255 ... 15
256 ... 18
257 ... 15
258-271 ... 10
272 ... 15
273-301 ... 10

Plop!
DC, 1973
1 ... 18
2-3 ... 8
4-5 ... 7
6-23 ... 5
24 ... 8

Popeye
DELL, 1948
1 ... 250
2 ... 150
3-5 ... 125
6-10 ... 100
11-20 ... 75
21-30 ... 60
31-50 ... 50
51-69 ... 40
70-80 ... 30
81-92 ... 25
93-100 ... 20
101-120 ... 15
121-138 ... 10
139-149 ... 7
150-155 ... 5
156-157 ... 10
158 ... 35
159 ... 30
162-167 ... 10
168-171 ... 18
Special 1 ... 2

Power Man & Iron Fist
MARVEL, 1974
17 ... 8
18-20 ... 5
21-30 ... 4
30/30¢ ... 20
31 ... 4
31/30¢ ... 20
32 ... 3
32/30¢ ... 20
33 ... 3
33/30¢ ... 20
34 ... 3
34/30¢ ... 20
35-44 ... 3
44/35¢ ... 15
45 ... 3
45/35¢ ... 15
46 ... 3
46/35¢ ... 15
47 ... 3
47/35¢ ... 15
48 ... 10
49-50 ... 6
51-52 ... 3
53-55 ... 4
56 ... 3
57 ... 12
58-65 ... 3
66 ... 20
➥2nd Sabretooth
67-77 ... 2
78 ... 5
79-83 ... 2
84 ... 6
85-125 ... 2
Ann 1 ... 4

Primer
COMICO, 1982
1 ... 5
2 ... 55
➥1st Grendel
3-4 ... 4
5 ... 50
6 ... 5

Rip Hunter... Time Master
DC, 1961
1 ... 350
2 ... 140
3 ... 115
4-5 ... 95
6-7 ... 85
8-15 ... 70

Our Army at War
DC, 1952
1 ... 1500
2 ... 750
3-4 ... 600
5-7 ... 500
8-11 ... 400
12 ... 325
13 ... 400
14 ... 325
15-19 ... 300
20 ... 275
21-31 ... 200
32-40 ... 175
41-50 ... 125
51-70 ... 100
71-80 ... 75
81 ... 2500
➥1st Sgt. Rock
82 ... 650
83 ... 1800
➥1st Kubert Rock
84 ... 300
85 ... 350
86-87 ... 300
88 ... 325
89-90 ... 300
91 ... 700
➥1st all-Rock issue
92-100 ... 175
101-112 ... 125
113-118 ... 150
119 ... 125
120-121 ... 80
122-125 ... 75

Justice-Rip Hunter $

Auction News

Heritage's May Signature Sale sets multiple records

According to Heritage Director of Operations, Comics Barry Sandoval, the firm's May 21-22 Signature Sale realized more than $3.69 million (with after-auction sales still ongoing). The number also includes the company's 19.5% buyer's premium on the lots. "We had 483 different winning bidders in this auction so we have a lot of packing and shipping to do. Plus the deadline for the next sale is only a month away, so time to do this all over again," he told ***CBG***. That would be June 22 for consignments for the August Signature Sale.

The auction set several records, including the highest price paid for a 1950s comics with a copy of *Showcase* #4 (Oct 56), CGC-graded 9.6 (Near Mint+) selling for $179,250.

As expected, a copy of *Incredible Hulk* #181 in CGC 9.8 (Near Mint/Mint) set a record for 1970s comics, selling for $26,290, beating the firm's previous record for a *Hulk* #181 by more than $8,000.

And a new record for an underground comic book was set with a copy of *Zap Comix* #1, CGC-graded 9.2 (Near Mint-) closing at $13,145.

The 113 lots featuring comics from the collection of Ralph Chicorel averaged $5,509 for a final total of $622,523, considerably more than the $3,000 Chicorel realized for the sale of many other Golden Age comics in the late 1960s. The highest-selling book in the lot was a copy of *Marvel Mystery* #9, which closed at $107,500.

In original art, the sale included a Curt Swan *Superman* cover which sold for $39,435. Sandoval said, "It's interesting in that it's not an all-out action page but one of those 'Superman being humiliated' covers of the Mort Weisinger era. It's from the estate of Charles Martignette, whose illustration art hoard of more than 4,000 pieces is headlining Heritage illustration auctions for the next year!"

Sandoval added that a Frank Miller *Daredevil* page co-starring Bullseye, surprised the auctioneers. "We expected a lot, but $17,925 surprised us," he said.

To see a complete list of auction results, visit *www.comics.ha.com*.

— Brent Frankenhoff

Stingers #1
Zenescope

$2.99, color, 30 pgs.
Writers: Joe Brusha, Ralph Tedesco; Artist: Wagner Reis
reviewed by **Kurt A. Krug**

★★½

Like many Zenescope tales, this is one that's best read in one setting. Alien insects attack Earth — that's the gist of it. However, that's put on the backburner to introduce the two main protagonists of this story: a bounty hunter named Hawk (who, with his goatee and shaved head, looks somewhat like Avery Brooks, the actor who played Hawk on *Spenser: For Hire* and *A Man Called Hawk*) and Sheriff Risa Keller (although her name's not revealed right away).

Both heroes come from different walks of life: Hawk is a street-smart street-fighter, whereas Risa is a small-town sheriff who makes it clear you don't want to cross her. The creative team does a good job of establishing these characters upfront. There's nothing wrong with character development. The reader knows that they will eventually become allies in the fight against the alien invasion.

Wagner Reis (not to be confused with artist Ivan Reis) does a good job on the art. Zenescope is one of a few indy publishers who really has a small yet good stable of artists to draw its books.

www.zenescope.com

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Rip Hunter...
CONTINUED
16-20 58
21-25 48
26-29 40

Roy Rogers Comics
DELL, 1948
1 600
2 275
3-5 200
6-10 140
11-20 105
21-30 90
31-40 75
41-50 55
51-60 45
61-80 35
81-100 30
101-145 25

Saga of the Swamp Thing
DC, 1982
1 3
2-19 2
20 15
➥Alan Moore starts
21 12
22-25 6
26-32 4
33-36 3
37 55
➥1st Heliblazer
38 15
39-40 9
41-45 4
Ann 1-3 3

Sandman
DC, 1989
1 25
2-3 12
4-7 4
8 15
➥1st Death
8/Ltd. 35
9-14 4
15-21 3
22 4
23-49 3
50 5
50/Gold 20
51-74 3
75 4
Book 1/2nd . . 20
Special 1 5

Savage Tales
MARVEL, 1971
1 150
2 32
3-4 20
5 12
6-11 10
12 8
Ann 1 25

Secret Origins
DC, 1961
Ann 1 400

Secret Origins
DC, 1973
1 18
2 8
3-4 7
5-7 6

Secret Origins
DC, 1986
1 5
2-50 2
Ann 1 3
Ann 2-3 2
GS 1 5
Special 1 2

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Secret Six
DC, 1968
1 45
2 15
3-5 12
6 15
7 20

Secret Society of Super-Villains
DC, 1976
1 10
2-8 5
9-15 3

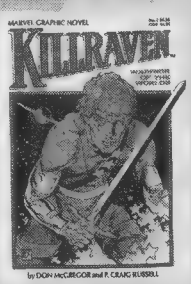
Sensation Comics
DC, 1942
1 27500
2 5200
3 2750
4 1850
5 1550
6 1400
7-10 1140
11-20 1075
21-30 840
31-34 610
35-40 560
41-50 495
51-60 455
61-67 395
68 500
➥1st Huntress
69-70 395
71-80 380
81 425
82-90 385
91-93 190
94 350
95-99 190
100-109 450

Sgt. Fury
MARVEL, 1963
1 1500
2 400
3-5 225
6-10 150
11-12 100
13 500
➥Cap. America app.
14-15 80
16-19 75
20-23 50
24 30
25-27 50
28-31 40
32-38 25
39-40 20
41-63 15
64-99 12
100 25
101 12
102 10
103-110 8
111-121 6
122-131 5
132-133 4
133/30¢ 20
134 4
134/30¢ 20
135-141 4
141-142/35¢ . 15
143-151 4
152-167 3
Ann 1 125
Ann 2 55
Ann 3 30
Ann 4 22
Ann 5 10
Ann 6-7 9

Sgt. Rock
DC, 1977.
302 25
➥Was *Our Army at War*
303-307 15
308-312 10
313-320 8
321-330 6

RETROVIEW

Marvel Graphic Novel #7 ★★★★



"Killraven: Warrior of the Worlds"

While attempting to destroy a Martian rocket base at Cape Kennedy, Killraven is reunited with his long-lost brother and meets an old female astronaut.

It took more than six years, but Don McGregor and P. Craig Russell had one last story of their post-apocalyptic hero to tell.

With the rise in popularity of such warriors in the early 1980s, it's no surprise that this story was published. The magazine-sized format and lack of Comics Code approval freed creators making for stories that would appeal to a more sophisticated audience, the audience that embraced Killraven's original adventures in the first place.

Marvel
ca. 1983 • 64 pp.
Writer: Don McGregor
Pencils: P. Craig Russell
Inks: Russell
Cover: Russell

© Marvel

Best CGC copy 9.6 **Then $5.95 NOW $6**

UNSLABBED Near Mint

331-341 5
342-350 4
351-390 3
391-422 2
Ann 1-2 4
Ann 3-4 3

Showcase
DC, 1956
1 3500
2-3 1000
4 27500
➥1st Silver Age Flash
5 1000
6 4000
7 2000
8 11500
➥2nd SA Flash
9 7500
10 3000
11-12 1750
13-14 4500
15 2000
16 1000
17 2750
➥1st Adam Strange
18 1200
19 1500
20 1000
21 500
22 5600
➥1st SA Grn. Lantern
23-24 1750
25-26 350
27 900
28-29 400
30 800
31-32 400
33 375
34 1250
35 700
36 525
37 700
38 400
39 350
40 300
41-42 150
43 450
44 100
45 325
46-47 100
48-52 80
53-54 100
55 275
➥Dr. Fate origin
56 125
57 225
58 150
59 125
60 225
➥Spectre origin
61 100

UNSLABBED Near Mint

62 80
63 50
64 100
➥Spectre app.
65 50
66-72 30
73 85
➥1st Creeper
74 45
➥1st Anthro
75 75
➥1st Hawk & Dove
76-77 50
78 35
79-81 45
82-84 40
85-87 20
88-93 15
94 20
➥New Doom Patrol
95-96 8
97-103 6
104 5

Silver Surfer
MARVEL, 1968
1 400
2 160
3 135
4 265
➥Surfer vs. Thor
5-6 75
7 90
8 95
9-10 60
11 65
12 50
13 70
14 125
➥Spider-Man app.
15-18 55

Spectre
DC, 1967
1 150
2 60
3-5 50
6-10 40

Spider-Man
MARVEL, 1990
-1 2
1-1/CS 5
1/Platinum . . . 42
1/Silver 5
2-8 3
9 6
10 4
11-12 3
13 5
14 3
15-25 2
26 4

UNSLABBED Near Mint

27-46 2
46/CS 3
47-49 2
50 3
50/Variant 4
51-51/Variant . . 3
52-56 2
57-57/Variant . . 3
58-74 2
75 4
76-98/B 2
Ann '97-'98 . . . 3
GS 1 4
Holiday 1995 . . 3

Star Spangled Comics
DC, 1941
1 4500
2 1800
3 1000
4-5 875
6 800
7 8000
➥1st Newsboy Legion
8-10 1600
11-16 1175
17 1500
18-19 1000
20-30 850
31-40 525
41-50 425
51-60 400
61-64 375
65 1050
➥Robin stories start
66-68 690
69 800
➥1st Tomahawk
70 690
71-80 575
81-83 450
84 625
85-86 450
87 625
88-94 500
95-99 265
100 300
101-110 225
111-112 200
113 375
114 325
115-131 200

Star Spangled War Stories
DC, 1952
132 (1) 750
133 (2) 550
3 475

UNSLABBED Near Mint

4-6 285
7-10 220
11-20 185
21-30 130
31-40 90
41-50 70
51-70 60
71-83 55
84 125
➥1st Mlle. Marie
85-87 80
88-89 65
90 325
➥1st Dinosaur Island
91 45
92 110
93 45
94-99 110
100 145
➥1st Sgt. Gorilla
101-133 60
134 65
135-138 60
139 50
140-143 24
144 27
145 35
146-150 20
151 125
➥1st Unknown Soldier
152-153 20
154 55
➥Unk. Soldier origin
155 16
156-161 14
162-180 6
181-204 5

Star Trek
GOLD KEY, 1967
1 350
2 125
3 100
4 90
5-6 75
7 60
8-9 50
10 40
11-19 30
20/Both 45
21-23 30
23/Whitman . . 45
24 25
24-25/Whitman35
26 25
26/Whitman . . 35
27 20
27/Whitman . . 30
28 20
29/Both 30
30-31 20
31-36/Whitman30

Killraven #1

★★★★

© Marvel

Marvel
Feb 2001 • 22 pp.
Writers: Joseph Michael Linsner, Eva Hopkins
Pencils: Linsner
Inks: Linsner
Cover: Linsner

"Killraven: 2020"

On a solo scouting trip, Killraven finds a young woman who has been in cryogenic sleep since 1976.

Nearly 20 years since his last appearance, but only a few months in his own timeline, Killraven returns in this one-shot by longtime fan and Dawn creator Joseph Michael Linsner.

As he related in an afterword, Linsner had wanted to do a Killraven story since he first read the *Amazing Adventures* stories back in the 1970s. Here, with the help of Eva Hopkins, Linsner realized his dream and did a great job of reintroducing the character to a modern audience, while producing a great Done in One story. Why weren't more stories produced?

9.8 Then $2.99 NOW $3

UNSLABBED Near Mint
37-38 20
38-39/Whitman30
40 20
40/Whitman .. 30
41/Both 25
42-43 15
44-45/Both... 25
46 15
46-48/Whitman25
49-51 15
51/Whitman .. 25
52 15
52-55/Whitman25
56 15
56-59/Whitman25
60 12
60/Whitman .. 20
61 12
Star Wars MARVEL, 1977
1 20
1/35¢ 800
1/2nd 4
2 10
2/35¢ 150
3 8
3/35¢ 150
4 7
4/35¢ 150
5-19 7
20-21 6
22-23 5
24-48 4
49 5
50-106 4
107 25
Ann 1 8
Ann 2-3 5
Strange Adventures DC, 1950
1 2500
2 1150
3 850
4 800
5-6 650
7 625
8 550
9 1250
➥1st Captain Comet
10 400
11 500
12 400
13 500
14 650
15 500
16 450
17 275
18-20 450
21-23 350

UNSLABBED Near Mint
24 375
25 350
26-29 300
30 425
31-38 275
39 400
40-41 250
42 275
43 250
44 325
45-46 250
47 200
48 250
49 200
50 225
51 200
52-53 225
54 150
55 200
56-60 150
61-70 125
71-74 100
75 75
76-78 100
79 150
80-83 100
84 125
85-90 100
91 90
92-93 80
94 75
95 90
96 65
97 90
98 75
99 90
100 125
101 65
102-103 90
104-106 65
107 75
108-109 65
110 75
111 65
112 60
113 90
114 125
➥1st Star Hawkins
115-116 60
117 550
➥1st Atomic Knights
118 75
119 90
120 200
➥2nd Atomic Knights
121-123 75
124 90
125-126 75
127 50
128 75
129 90
130-131 50

UNSLABBED Near Mint
132 75
133-135 65
136-137 50
138 55
139-140 50
141 55
142-145 50
146 40
147-148 50
149 40
150-160 50
161-167 35
168 30
169 35
170 50
171-172 30
173 40
174 30
175 40
176-177 30
178 25
179 30
180 150
➥1st Animal Man
181 25
182-183 30
184 60
185-186 25
187 20
188 25
189 30
190 100
191 20
192-193 25
194 20
195 35
196-197 25
198 20
199 30
200 25
201 40
202-204 20
205 125
➥Deadman begins
206 60
➥Adams Deadman
207 50
208-212 60
213 40
214 60
215 45
216 40
217-219 20
220 25
221-223 20
224-230 15
231-244 10
Strange Tales MARVEL, 1951
1 2750

UNSLABBED Near Mint
2 800
3-5 700
6-10 550
11-20 350
21-30 275
31-44 225
45-58 200
59 225
60 200
61 225
62-63 175
64 200
65-66 175
67-78 200
79 250
80 200
81-83 175
84 200
85-88 175
89 400
➥Kirby Fin Fang Foom
90-92 175
93-96 150
97 350
➥Aunt May & Uncle Ben
98-100 150
101 900
➥Human Torch starts
102 425
➥Human Torch app.
103-105 300
106 225
107 250
108-109 225
110 1250
➥1st Dr. Strange
111 350
112-113 150
114 350
115 450
➥Dr. Strange origin
116 125
117-118 100
119-123 125
124-125 75
126 90
127-129 75
130 90
131-134 75
135 125
➥1st S.H.I.E.L.D.
136 75
137-147 50
148 75
➥Ancient One origin
149-150 50
151 75
152-158 50
159 60
160-168 50

UNSLABBED Near Mint
169 15
➥Series restarted
170 10
171-177 7
178 15
179-181 10
182-185 3
185/30¢ 20
186 3
186/30¢ 20
187-188 3
Ann 1-2 350
Sub-Mariner MARVEL, 1968
1 125
2 45
3-4 35
5 30
6-7 25
8 75
➥vs. The Thing
9 30
10 25
11-13 20
14 50
➥Toro dies
15-30 20
31-33 15
34 70
➥Hulk, Surfer app.

UNSLABBED Near Mint
35 35
➥Hulk, Surfer app.
36-40 15
41-Special 1 .. 10
Special 2 15
Sugar & Spike DC, 1956
1 1700
2 700
3-5 500
6-10 350
11-20 250
21-30 150
31-40 125
41-50 75
51-60 55
61-80 50
81-98 35
Superboy DC, 1949
1 7000
2 2000
3 1500
4-5 1000
6-10 800
11-15 600
16-20 450
21-30 350

UNSLABBED Near Mint
31-38 275
39-50 225
51-60 175
61-67 125
68 500
➥1st Bizarro
69-77 100
78 175
➥Mxyzptlk origin
79 100
80 150
➥Meets Supergirl
81-85 90
86 200
➥Legion app.
87-88 90
89 275
➥1st Mon-El
90-93 90
94-97 75
98 100
99 75
100 175
➥Phtm. Zone villains
101-120 60
121-128 50
129 75
130-137 40
138 55
➥Giant-sized
139-140 40

UNSLABBED Near Mint
141-146 35
147 50
➥Saturn Girl origin
148-155 25
156 65
➥Giant-size
157-164 25
165 50
➥Giant-size
166-168 25
169-173 20
174 30
175-178 20
➥Giant-sized
179-181 15
182 20
183-196 12
197 20
➥Legion stories start
198-199 12
200 15
201 12
202 30
203-204 12
205 40
206-207 12
208 15
209 10
210 15
211-212 10
213-221 7

UNSLABBED Near Mint
222-230 5
Ann 1 175
SP 1 4
Superboy and the Legion of Super-Heroes DC, 1977
231-250 5
251-258 4
Superman DC, 1939
1 160000
2 16000
3 9200
4 6500
5 6000
6-7 3500
8-10 2850
11-13 2200
14 4500
➥U.S. flag cover
15 2050
16-20 1650
21 1500
22-23 1100
24 1400
25 1050
26 1250

Original Art

A "Peek" at the Golden Age

In 1937, *Des Moines Register and Tribune* created *Look* magazine by expanding the rotogravure picture section in its Sunday paper and adding a thicker color cover. As a photo magazine, *Look* was a great success. Soon, it had dozens of competitors: less-literate, tabloid magazines featuring many photos but not many real stories, mixing humor, movie coverage, and pin-up photos to fill 38 pages for 10¢.

Some of these magazines were published by companies that also produced comics. I've noted Stan Lee's early work on the Timely (Marvel) tabloid magazines in earlier articles. MLJ produced other magazines from which the recent reprinting of "A Visit to the MLJ Offices" in *Alter Ego* was taken.

The August 1941 issue of *Peek* (not affiliated with any comic book publisher) has an early piece on comic books. Titled "The Comics Come to Life," it features model Merle Louis in scanty costumes. The story draws from a wide range of series, from *Sheena* (seen above) to such well-known heroines as *Li'l Abner*'s Daisy Mae and *Terry and the Pirates*' Burma. What was most interesting, though, were depictions of more obscure series, including Camilla from *Jungle Comics*, Betty Bates and Strange Twins from Quality's *Hit*, and Queen of the Seas from an early Black Pirate story in *Action Comics #*33 (Feb 41).

I have posted the various photos in the original art section at *www.cbgxtra.com* so you can see how this early attempt to do real-life comics turned out.

— George Hagenauer

Star Trek: Alien Spotlight: Tribbles
IDW

$3.99, color, 32 pgs.
Writer: Stuart Moore
Artist: Mike Hawthorne
reviewed by **Brett Weiss**

★★★

David Gerrold's "The Trouble with Tribbles" is one of the most popular *Star Trek* episodes of all time, spawning an animated sequel ("More Troubles, More Tribbles"), a *Deep Space Nine* tribute episode ("Trials and Tribble-ations"), and now a comic-book sequel. *Star Trek: Alien Spotlight: Tribbles* is told, in part, from the Tribbles' point of view, with the furry little critters calling the hated Klingons "Rufflefurs" and the beloved humans "Warmhands."

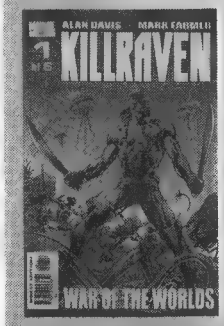
The story is slight, especially considering the four-dollar price tag, but it uses the best aspects of "The Trouble with Tribbles" to fun effect, namely the rapid reproductive rate of the Tribbles and the Klingons' ironically irrational fear of the Tribbles. The sketchy, cartoonish art is slight as well (if serviceable), but the human characters behave like what they are — a cargo delivery crew — not Starfleet officers. This adds a dash of verisimilitude to the funny, farcical, goings-on.

Don't let cover B fool you: Captain Kirk doesn't appear inside, though it's hard to blame IDW for using the iconic shot of Shatner covered in Tribbles.

www.idwpublishing.com

RETROVIEW
Killraven #1

★★★½



Marvel
Dec 2002 • 22 pg.
Writer: Alan Davis
Pencils: Davis
Inks: Mark Farmer
Cover: Davis, Farmer

"John" • "Gramps" • "Marvo"

While scavenging for food, a boy and his mother are attacked by Keepers, humans intent on recapturing escaped slaves Killraven and his band.

Alan Davis revisited the world of Killraven with this six-issue mini-series and did a terrific job of updating the 1970s series. Instead of Killraven acquiring members of his band willy nilly, here the team is a group of escaped gladiatorial slaves.

Davis also plays the aged-survivor card with John's surrogate grandfather giving Killraven and, by extension, readers vital information about the Martian invasion. The big question is: What the heck is Marvo?

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Best CGC copy: 9.4 **Then $2.99 NOW $3**

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Superman CONTINUED
27-29 950
30 1350
↳1st Mr. Mxyzptlk
31-40 825
41-50 650
51-52 525
53 1800
↳Superman origin
54-60 500
61 1000
↳1st Kryptonite
62-70 475
71-75 450
76 1100
↳Batman team-up
77-80 400
81-90 375
91-95 360
96-99 325
100 1500
101-110 280
111-120 240
121-130 195
131-139 155
140 175
↳1st Bizarro Jr.
141-145 115
146 160
↳Superman origin
147 135
148 115
149 125
↳Legion app.
150-161 68
162-180 58
181-186 55
187 60
188-192 55
193 60
194-198 55
199 180
↳1st race with Flash
200 60
201 24
202 30
203-211 24
212 50
↳Superbabies
213-216 24
217 30
218-221 20
222 30
223-226 20
227 30
228-231 20
232 30
233 40
↳Kryptonite destroyed
234-238 18
239 30
↳Giant-sized
240-244 18
245 22
246-251 18
252 60
↳100-page issue
253 18
254 22
255-264 9
265-271 8
272 20
↳100-page issue
273-277 7
278 17
↳100-page issue
279-283 5
284 7
285-286 5
287-292 4
293-299 3
300 11
301-350 3
351-399 2
400 5
401-422 2
423 5
Ann 1 600
Ann 2 325
Ann 3 210
Ann 4 180
Ann 5 105
Ann 6 90
Ann 7 62
Ann 8 46
Ann 9-10 5
Ann 11 4
Ann 12 3
Special 1-3 4

Superman
DC, 1987
0 3
1-2 4
3-5 3
6-8 2
9 4
10-49 2
50 4
51-52 2
53 3
54-72 2
73 3
74 4
75 5
↳Death of Superman
75/CS 12
75/Platinum .. 40
76-77 3
78 2
78/CS 3
79-82 2
82/Variant 4
83-99 2
100 3
100/Variant ... 4
101-122 2
123 3
123/Variant ... 5
124-150 2
150/Variant ... 4
151-170 2
171 4
172-174 2
175 4
176-190 2
190/A 4
191 2
192 3
193-199 2
200 4
201 8
202 2
203 6
204 4
204/Sketch .. 250
204/DF Lee ... 30
204/DF Azzarell25
205/Lee 4
205/Variants ... 3
205/DF Turner 25
206-207 3
208 5
209 4
210-215 3
216 5
↳Inf. Crisis tie
217 7
↳OMAC app.
218 5
219 6
↳Sacrifice Pt. 1
219/Variant-226 3
650 8
651-675 3
1000000 4
1000000/Ltd .. 15
Ann 1 4
Ann 2-6 3
Ann 7 4
Ann 8-11 3
Ann 12 4
GS 1-2 5
GS 3 6
Special 1 4
3D 1 5

Superman Family
DC, 1974
164 35
↳100-page issue
165-169 13
↳100-page issue
170-177 11
178-180 5
181-200 4
201-222 3

Superman's Girl Friend Lois Lane
DC, 1958
1 2600
2 625
3 415
4-5 300
6-10 220
11-18 125
19 215
20 125
21-29 86
30-50 48
51-67 34
68 44
69 34
70 175
↳1st SA Catwoman
71 105
↳Catwoman app.
72-73 15
74 34
75-76 15
77 24
78 15
79-85 10
86 16
87-94 10
95 25
↳Giant-sized
96-103 8
104 16
105-106 14
107-110 6
111 10
112 6
113 14
114-120 6
121 5
122-123 8
124-137 5
Ann 1 75
Ann 2 50

Superman's Pal Jimmy Olsen
DC, 1954
1 4000
2 1250
3 675
4-5 475
6-10 335
11-20 235
21-30 150
31-40 100
41-50 75
51-56 50
57-70 30
71 25
72-73 30
74-75 25
76 30
77-88 25
89-90 20
91-94 16
95 25
96-99 16
100 25
101-103 12
104 35
↳Weird Adventures
105-112 12
113 25
↳Anti-Superman ish
114-119 12
120-126 10
127 16
128-130 10
131-132 8
133 10
134 25
135-140 12
141-150 10
151 8
152-163 7

Swamp Thing
DC, 1972
1 60
2 30
3-4 20
5-6 15
7 12
8-10 10
11-24 5

Swamp Thing
DC, 1986
46 4
47-49 3
50 4
51 3
52 4
53 5
↳Batman app.
54-81 3
82-83 2
84 5
85-89 2
90 3
91-99 2
100 3
101-124 2
125 3
126-140 2
140/Platinum .. 6
141-149 2
150 3
151-158 2
159-171 3
Ann 4-5 4
Ann 6 3
Ann 7 4

Tales From the Crypt
E.C., 1950
20 775
21 900
22 700
23-25 520
26-30 400
31 460
32 300
33 675
↳Crypt Keeper origin
34-46 295

Tales of Suspense
MARVEL, 1959
1 1400
2 540
3 475
4 450
5-10 325
11-20 240
21-32 150
33-38 135
39 3500
↳1st Iron Man
40 1100
41 650
42-45 325
↳1st Crim. Dynamo
46-47 210
48 265
↳1st red/gold armor
49 210
50 155
51 105
52 140
53 120
54-56 62
57 170
58-59 210
60 120
61-62 82
63 180
↳Bucky origin
64 72
65-66 125
↳Red Skull origin
67-70 52
71-80 42
81-99 32

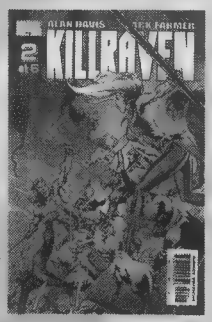
Tales to Astonish
MARVEL, 1959
1 2000
2 635
3-5 440
6-10 355
11-20 265
21-26 200
27 3600
↳1st Hank Pym
28-34 175
35 1900
↳1st Ant-Man
36 625
37-40 350
41-43 230
44 500
↳1st Wasp
45-48 150
49 250
↳1st Giant Man
50-56 95
57 125
↳Spider-Man app.
58 95
59 150
↳Giant-Man vs. Hulk
60 175
↳Hulk stories start
61 75
62 90
↳1st Leader
63-65 75
66-69 70
70 100
↳Namor stories start
71-81 55
82 78
↳Iron Man app.
83-90 55
91 52
↳Silver Surfer app.
92-93 75
↳Silver Surfer app.
94-99 50
100 75
101 85

Tarzan
DELL, 1948
1 900
2 525
3-5 385
6-9 290
10 260
11 235
12-15 220
16-20 160
21-30 135
31-54 80
55-70 50
71-79 42

RETROVIEW

Killraven #2

★★★



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"Mint Julep" • "Volcana"

Killraven is offered the chance to join Mint Julep and her rebels but refuses and frees pyrotechnic Volcana Ash instead.

The identity of Marvo is quickly revealed this issue as a mind-controlling mutant in Mint Julep's employ.

It's fun to see slightly updated versions of characters from the *Amazing Adventures* run, and, here, in approximately the same number of pages, Alan Davis develops Mint Julep much more fully than she was originally.

This mini-series lacks one thing: a goal for Killraven to pursue beyond survival. It's a third of the way through, and there's been plenty of action but no plot development.

Marvel
Jan 2003 • 23 pp.
Writer: Alan Davis
Pencils: Davis
Inks: Mark Farmer
Cover: Davis, Farmer

CBG copy: 9.6 Then $2.99 NOW $3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

80-99 30
100 40
101-110 28
111-120 25
121-131 20
132-154 14
155 18
156-162 10
163-164 8
165 10
166-167 8
168 10
169-170 8
171 10
172-200 7
201-206 6

Tarzan
DC, 1972
207 17
208 10
209-210 6
211-229 4
230-235 8
236-258 3

Tarzan
MARVEL, 1977
1 3
1/35¢ 15
2 2
2/35¢ 15
3 2
3/35¢ 15
4 2
4/35¢ 15
5 2
5/35¢ 15
6-29 2
Ann 1 3
Ann 2-3 2

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
MIRAGE, 1984
1 300
1/Counterfeit . . 2
2 28
2/Counterfeit . . 2
3-3/Misprint . . 15
4 12
5 4
6 3
7 5
8 4
9-10 3
11 4
12-15 3
16-62 2

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Teen Titans
DC, 1966
1 260
2 100
3-5 40
6-10 32
11-17 28
18-22 33
23-25 18
26-30 12
31 20
➥Giant-sized
32-38 18
39-43 12
44-47 7
48 12
49 7
50 20
51-53 6

Thor
MARVEL, 1966
126 125
127-140 45
141-160 32
161-164 25
165 40
➥Warlock app.
166 36
167 24
➥Galactus origin
168-169 36
➥Galactus origin
170-177 20
178-179 18
180 24
➥Thor vs. Mephisto
181 23
182-192 12
193 55
194-199 12
200 16
201-205 9
206-224 7
225 14
➥1st Firelord
226 7
227-260 5
260/35¢ 15
261 5
261/35¢ 15
262 5
262/35¢ 15
263 5
263/35¢ 15
264 5
264/35¢ 15
265-299 3
300 8
301-336 2
337 7
➥1st Beta Ray Bill
338 3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

339 5
340 4
341 3
342 4
343-348 2
349 3
350-373 2
374 3
375-400 2
401-410 1
411 3
412 2
413-431 1
432-433 2
434-449 1
450 3
451-473 1
474-475 2
475/Variant . . . 3
476-481 2
482 3
483-499 2
500 3
501-502 2
Ann 2 65
Ann 3 12
Ann 4 10
Ann 5-7 7
Ann 8 6
Ann 9-12 4
Ann 13-19 3

Thor
MARVEL, 1998
1 5
1/A 20
1/B 5
1/C 6
1/D 8
1/E 5
2-2/A 3
3-11 2
12 3
12/DF 15
13-25 2
25/Gold 5
26-31 2
32 4
33-34 2
35 3
36-61 2
62-79 3
80 28
➥Avngrs Dissmbled
81 5
➥Avngrs Dissmbled
82-84 4
➥Avngrs Dissmbled
85 3
Ann '99-'01 . . . 4

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Thrilling Comics
BETTER, 1940
1 2000
2 800
3 650
4-10 500
11-18 425
19 500
➥1st Amer. Crusader
20 425
21-30 350
31-40 310
41 700
42-52 270
53-70 225
71-80 90

THUNDER Agents
TOWER, 1965
1 140
2 75
3-5 55
6-8 42
9-10 35
11-15 38
16-19 22
20 15

Thunderbolts
MARVEL, 1997
-1 2
0 1
1 4
2-5 3
6-11 2
12 6
13-24 2
25 3
26-49 2
50 3
51-76 2
77-78 3
79-81 2
100 4
101-102 3
103 8
104-109 3
110 5
Ann '97 3

Tick
NEC, 1988
1 15
2 8
2/Variant 15
3 6
4-5 8
6-7 5
8-8/Variant 8
9-12 3
12/Ltd. 20

UNSLABBED Near Mint

13 4
Special 1 50
Special 2 25

Titans
DC, 1999
1 3
1/Autographed 16
2-24 3
25 4
26-50 3
Ann 1 4

Tomahawk
DC, 1950
1 850
2 400
3-5 290
6-10 195
11-20 125
21-27 100
28 110
29 130
➥Frazetta art
30 90
31-40 70
41-50 56
51-56 45
57 85
➥Frazetta art
58-60 40
61-80 32
81-90 25
91-100 15
101-110 10
111-120 8
121-132 6
133-140 5

Tom & Jerry Comics
DELL, 1949
60 50
61-65 40
66-70 36

UNSLABBED Near Mint

71-80 28
81-90 24
91-100 18
101-110 14
111-120 12
121-130 9
131-150 7
151-170 6
171-190 5
191-200 4
201-230 3
231-300 2
301-327 1
328-329 5
330 20
331-341 7
342-344 15

Tomb of Darkness
MARVEL, 1974
9 20
➥Cont'd from Beware
10-20 10
20/30¢ 20
21 10
21/30¢ 20
22-23 10

Tomb of Dracula
MARVEL, 1972
1 100
2-3 35
4 30
5-6 18
7 15
8-9 12
10 100
➥1st Blade
11 10
12 12
13 35
➥Blade origin

UNSLABBED Near Mint

14 12
15-16 10
17 12
18 10
19 12
20-21 10
22-29 8
30 10
31-32 8
33-41 7
42-43 6
43/30¢ 18
44 6
44/30¢ 18
45 6
45/30¢ 18
46 6
46/30¢ 18
47 6
47/30¢ 18
48-49 6
50 10
51-57 6
57/35¢ 12
58 6
58/35¢ 12
59 6
59/35¢ 12
60 6
60/35¢ 12
61-69 5
70 8

Tomb of Dracula
MARVEL, 2004
1-4 3

Tomb of Dracula
MARVEL, 1979
1 15
2-6 6

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Top 10
DC, 1999
1 5
1/Variant 6
2-12 3

Top-Notch Comics
M.L.J., 1939
1 3500
2 1500
3 1000
4 825
5 900
6-8 650
9 3000
➥1st Black Hood
10 1000
➥2nd Black Hood
11-15 625
16-20 550
21-30 425
31-45 250

Tower of Shadows
MARVEL, 1969
1 55
2-5 25
6-8 15
9 8
Special 1 22

Transformers
MARVEL, 1984
1 10
2-3 5
4-69 3
70-76 5
77-79 10
80 18

True 3-D
HARVEY, 1953
1-2 30

UNSLABBED Near Mint

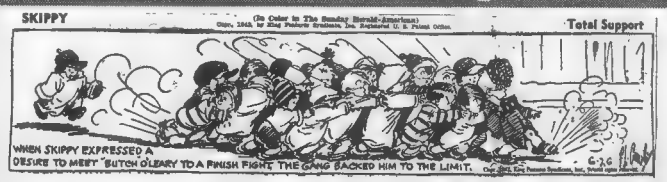
Truth: Red, White & Black
MARVEL, 2003
1 5
2-7 4

Turok, Son of Stone
DELL, 1956
3 155
4-5 125
6-7 110
7/15¢ 135
8-10 110
11-20 75
21-30 48
31-40 38
41-50 28
51-60 22
61-70 15
71-110 8
111-130 6
GS 1 100

TV Stars
MARVEL, 1978
1 15
2-4 7

Twilight Zone
GOLD KEY, 1962
1 90
2 55
3 42
4-10 35
11-20 30
21-27 16
28-30 10
31-40 8
41-51 6
52-70 5
71-92 4

Original Art



The scarcity of *Skippy* originals

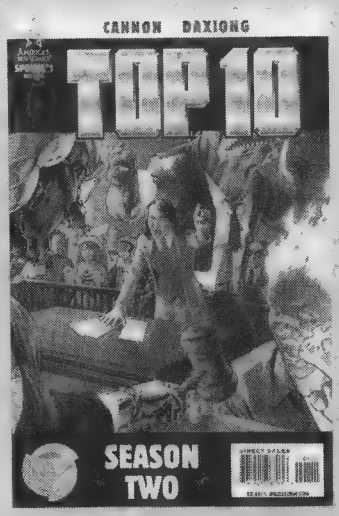
I finally got a *Skippy* original by Percy Crosby (1891-1964). It took me a long while — partly because I wanted one with children in motion. Another factor was the scarcity of *Skippy* art on the market, and the reason behind that is tragic.

Skippy was an incredibly popular comic strip that ran for 20 years. At points, it was as well known as *Peanuts*. Crosby's deft line and sentimental, often philosophical, humor brought him fame and fortune. It also brought him problems. Negotiations with a peanut-butter company ended with a product carrying his character's name to this day — but ownership battles that devastated Crosby's life. When income tax was introduced, he owed a lot that did not get promptly paid. In the midst of this stress, Percy Crosby began drinking heavily.

By 1940, his life was a shambles, and he was divorced, in debt, and often off-kilter from too much drink. He began having trouble making deadlines. The artist, rumored to have once drawn six dailies in 90 minutes before passing out at a bar, began recycling old dailies. The piece above is a 1942 clipped daily I own that is almost the same as a 1932 daily in Jerry Robinson's excellent book *Skippy and Percy Crosby*. I have seen originals from this period, and the differences usually occurred from clipping out sections to change the art and/or pasting on new dialogue or captions. In some cases the same older art was *reused several times in a year*. This not only reduced the number of originals created but took a heavy toll on the condition of the reused dailies.

Skippy ended in 1945, and Crosby was institutionalized in 1949 and finished his life in a mental ward.

— George Hagenauer



Top 10 Season Two Special
DC/WildStorm

$2.99, color, 32 pgs.
Writers: Zander Cannon, Keith Cannon; Artist: Daxiong
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz**

★★★

We've followed "Law" in *Top 10* until this point, now we get to see "Order." Instead of following the police department of Neopolis as we usually do, this issue follows the justice system as Sung Li, aka Girl Two, defends a client who may actually be innocent, but who refuses to cooperate.

We may not get to see the full complement of wacky characters to which we may have become accustomed, but it is compensated for by the new look at life in a city of super-powered residents. One enjoyable addition to the cast is "Mr. Bannell," the prosecuting attorney with a crush on Girl Two and a penchant for turning into a muscle-bound green monster when losing his temper.

Yes, the plot is a retread of countless courtroom dramas from time immemorial, but *Perry Mason* never had pastiches of Dr. Manhattan, Judge Dredd, and Dormammu running around. Missing this issue will not detract from following the regular ongoing series, but reading it will enhance the experience. Read it or Bannell smash.

www.wildstorm.com

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Two-Fisted Tales
E.C., 1950
18. 700
19. 500
20. 325
21-22. 260
23-25. 210
26-30. 160
31-35. 130
36-41. 115
Ann 1. 550
Ann 2. 400

Ultimate Fantastic Four
MARVEL, 2004
1. 5
2. 4
3. 3
4. 2
5. 3
6. 2
7. 3
[redacted] 4
9-13. 2
13/Sketch. 6
14-18. 2
19. 5
20. 4
21. 6
21/Variant 8
22. 16
23. 7
24-37. 3
Ann 1-Ann 2. . . 4
Book 1. 13

Ultimate Iron Man
MARVEL, 2005
1/Kubert. 5
1/Hitch. 4
1/Sketch. 6
2-5. 3

Ultimates
MARVEL, 2002
1. 7
1/DF Millar. . . 20
1/DF Quesada. 25
2. 9
3. 6
4. 10
5. 8
6. 7
7. 6
8. 5
9. 6
10. 4
11. 3
12. 2
13. 4
13/DF Millar. . 20

Ultimate Spider-Man
MARVEL, 2000
½. 8
½/A 18
1. 65
1/White 375
1/Dynamic . . 175
1/Kay-Bee. 4
1/FCBD. 3
1/Checkers. . . . 7
1/Payless. 6
1/Target 175
3. 16
4. 8
5. 55
6. 9
6/Niagara 35
7. 9
8. 8
8/Payless-10 . . 6
11. 5
12. 4
13. 5
14. 4
15. 5
16-21. 3
22. 4
23-26. 3
27. 4
28. 3
29. 4
30. 3
31. 4
32. 3
33. 4
34-46. 3
47. 4
48-49. 3
50. 4
53. 3
60. 8
61. 5
62. 8
63. 5
➥Gwen Stacy returns
64. 4
65. 5
66. 2
67. 3
68-71. 2
72. 4
73-77. 2
78-99. 3
100. 4
101-125. 3
Ann 1. 4
Ann 2. 3
SP 1. 4

Ultimate X-Men
MARVEL, 2000
½. 5
1. 14
1/Sketch. 20
1/Dynamic . . . 40
1/Checkers. . . 30
1/NYPost 8
1/Universal. . . 60
2. 7
3. 6
4-5. 5
6-10. 4
11-12. 3
13. 4
14. 3
15. 4
16-17. 3
18. 5
19. 4
20-26. 3
27-32. 2
33. 5
34. 4
40. 2
41. 5
42. 4
43-49. 2
50. 5
50/Conv 15
51-59. 2
60-61. 3
61/Coipel 5
62-74. 3
75. 4
76-88. 3
Ann 1-Ann 2. . . 4

Umbrella Academy: Apocalypse Suite
DARK HORSE, 2007
1. 8
2-6. 3

Uncanny X-Men
MARVEL, 1970
-1. 2
142. 25
➥Future Past
143. 8
144. 6
145. 7
146-148. 6
149-157. 5
158. 6
➥Rogue app.
159-161. 5
162. 6
163-166. 5
167. 4
➥Rogue joins team
168-175. 5
176-177. 4
178. 5
179. 4
180. 3
181. 4
182-183. 5
184-186. 4
187-188. 3
189-190. 4
191. 5
192. 4
193. 5
194-199. 3
200. 6
201. 5
➥Portacio art
202-209. 4
210-211. 5
➥Wolv. vs. Sabretooth
212-213. 8
➥Wolv. vs. Sabretooth
214-215. 3
216. 4
217-218. 3
219-220. 4
221. 7
➥1st Mr. Sinister
222. 5
➥Wolv. vs. Sabretooth
223. 4
224-231. 3
232. 4
233-243. 3
244. 5
➥1st Jubilee
245-247. 3
248. 5
➥1st Jim Lee X-Men
249-258. 3
259. 4
260-265. 3
266. 14
➥1st Gambit
267-268. 6
269. 3
270. 4
271-280. 3
281. 2
282. 3
283. 5
284. 4
285. 3
286. 2
287. 3
288-291. 2
292. 3
293. 2
294/CS. 3
295/CS. 2
296/CS. 3
297-299. 2
300. 3
301-302. 2
303. 3
304-306. 2
307. 5
308-328. 2
329. 4
330-352. 2
353. 3
354-362. 2
363. 4
364. 3
365-374. 2
375. 3
376-378. 2
379. 3
380-381. 2
381/Dynamic . . 7
382. 2
383. 3
384-386. 2
387. 3
388-399. 2
400. 4
401-403. 2
404. 4
405-415. 2
416. 3
417-421. 2
422. 4
423-429. 2
430-438. 3
439. 2
440-441. 3
442. 2
443. 3
444. 4
445-449. 2
450. 7
451. 6
➥X-23 app.
452. 3
453-454. 2
455. 4
456-459. 2
460-461. 3
461/Kubert. . . 15
462-491. 3
492. 6
493-499. 3
500. 5
501-503. 3
Ann 1. 50
Ann 2. 45
Ann 3. 14
Ann 4. 6
Ann 5. 5
Ann 6. 7
Ann 7. 5
Ann 8. 4
Ann 9. 10
Ann 10. 8
Ann 11-12 4
Ann 13. 3
Ann 14. 6
Ann 15. 4
Ann 16. 2
Ann 17-18 3
Ann 1995. 4
Ann '96-'98 . . . 3
Ann '00-'01 . . . 4

Uncle Scrooge
DELL, 1953
4. 310
5. 220
6-7. 185
8. 140
9-10. 125
11-15. 100
16-20. 80
21-30. 65
31-40. 55
41-50. 45
51-70. 40
71. 38
72-100. 32
101-120. 20
121-140. 18
141-160. 12
161-171. 10
172-176. 15
177-178. 25
179. 225
180. 35
181-185. 15
186-197. 10
198. 15
199-200. 10
201-219. 6
220-240. 5
241-260. 4
261-299. 3
300-308. 2
309-318. 7

Uncle Scrooge
GEMSTONE, 2003
319-349. 7

Unexpected
DC, 1968
105. 50
➥Was Tales of ...
106-113. 35
114-116. 30
117-127. 25
128. 45
➥Wrightson art
129-139. 20
140-156. 15
157-162. 30
➥100 pages
163-188. 10
189-190. 7
191. 10
192-206. 7
207-222. 5

Unknown Soldier
DC, 1977
205-210. 5
211-229. 4
230-247. 3
248-249. 5
250-267. 3
268. 5

Vampire Lestat
INNOVATION, 1990
1. 5
2-12. 3

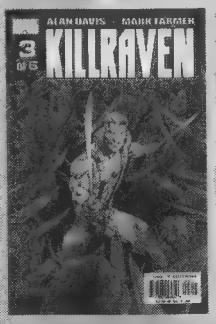
Vampirella
WARREN, 1969
1. 325
2. 125
3. 200
4-5. 75
6-9. 70
10. 30
11-15. 43
16-25. 30
26. 20
27. 30
28-36. 25
37-45. 20
46. 25
47-50. 20
51-70. 17
71-99. 16
100. 30
101-111. 16
112. 45
113. 195
Ann 1. 175
Special 1 30

Vampire Tales
MARVEL, 1973
1. 35
2-7. 18
8-10. 20
11. 25
Ann 1. 30
➥Scarce

RETROVIEW

Killraven #3

★★★½



"Chimera" • "Lucifer" • "Cerberus"

Killraven, Old Skull, and John explore the ruins of Washington, D.C., where they encounter a survivor with delusions of grandeur.

Hearkening back to some of the *Amazing Adventures* stories, Alan Davis presents his vision of a post-invasion America with mutated creatures, power-hungry local dictators, and the Martians lording it over everybody.

While it's part of the overall miniseries, this issue comes close to being a Done in One tale. Showing Killraven's gladiatorial skills never gets old, and having Old Skull suffering from a head injury rather than an actual handicap is an appreciated touch.

Marvel
Feb 2003 • 23 pp.
Writer: Alan Davis
Pencils: Davis
Inks: Mark Farmer
Cover: Davis, Farmer

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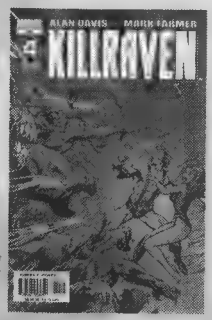
CGC copies

Then $2.99 NOW $3

Killraven #4

★★★



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"Grok" • "Old Skull" "Keeper Whitman"

While rescuing Volcana from a Martian laboratory, Killraven, M'shulla, and Carmilla free hundreds of mutated creatures, including one named Grok, who befriends Carmilla.

Marvel
Mar 2003 • 23 pp.
Writer: Alan Davis
Pencils: Davis
Inks: Mark Farmer
Cover: Davis, Farmer

Two-thirds of the way through the mini-series, and it appears that the whole story is just going to be Killraven moving from one adventure to another while making life miserable for the Martians. There's not a lot here to keep readers coming back for later issues.

The boy, John, is in training with Old Skull, and it appears that John will play a bigger part before the mini-series ends.

est. now 9.8 Then $2.99 NOW $3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Vault of Evil
MARVEL, 1973
1..... 60
2-4..... 25
5-10..... 15
11-23..... 12

Vault of Horror
E.C., 1950
12..... 4000
13..... 800
14..... 725
15..... 600
16..... 500
17-19..... 360
20-25..... 275
26-30..... 225
31-40..... 185

Venom
MARVEL, 2003
1..... 10
2..... 3
3-7..... 2
8..... 3
9..... 4
10-18..... 3

Veronica
ARCHIE, 1989
1-20..... 2
21-35..... 1
36-177..... 2

V for Vendetta
DC, 1988
➥Alan Moore series
1-10..... 3

Villains United
DC, 2005
1..... 12
1/2nd..... 8
1/3rd..... 3
2..... 5
3-5..... 3
6..... 4

Vision & Scarlet Witch
MARVEL, 1982
1-4..... 2

Vision & Scarlet Witch
MARVEL, 1985
1..... 2
2-12..... 1

Walking Dead
IMAGE, 2003
1..... 45
2..... 32
3..... 15
4..... 12
4/A..... 6
5..... 4
6-51..... 3

Walt Disney's Comics and Stories
DELL, 1940
1..... 20000
2..... 7500
3..... 3400
4..... 2050
5..... 1250
6-7..... 1100
8-9..... 900
10..... 850
11-15..... 750
16-17..... 650
18..... 625
19-30..... 580
31..... 3700
➥Barks Donald starts
32..... 2000
33..... 1200
34..... 950
35-36..... 840
37..... 435
38..... 650
39-40..... 580
41-46..... 500
47-50..... 475
51-60..... 375
61-70..... 305
71-80..... 240
81-87..... 215
88..... 270
89-90..... 210
91-97..... 190
98..... 365
➥Unc. Scrooge starts
99..... 190
100..... 200
101-112..... 155
113-116..... 90
117..... 130
118-123..... 85
124..... 130
125..... 190
126-129..... 130
130-133..... 125
134..... 200
135-139..... 105
140..... 225
➥1st Barks Gyro
141-150..... 94
151-170..... 88
171-200..... 80
201-240..... 75
241-260..... 60
261-283..... 50
284-285..... 25
286..... 28
287..... 25
288-289..... 28
290..... 25
291-293..... 28
294-296..... 25
297-308..... 28
309-311..... 25
312..... 28
313-334..... 14
335..... 25
336-341..... 14
342-351..... 25
351-60/Poster 30
351-60/No poster 20
361-400..... 25
401-429..... 14
430..... 10
431-432..... 12
433..... 10
434-436..... 12
437-438..... 10
439-440..... 12
441-443..... 10
444-445..... 6
446-465..... 10
466..... 6
467-478..... 10
479..... 30
480..... 125
481-484..... 30
485-510..... 10
511..... 15
512-513..... 12
514-516..... 8
517-518..... 5
519..... 14
520-549..... 10
550..... 6
551-554..... 4
555-556..... 3
557-573..... 4
574-577..... 5
578-579..... 3
580..... 5
581-584..... 3
585..... 5
586-597..... 3
598-599..... 4
600-611..... 6
612-648..... 7

Walt Disney's Comics & Stories
GEMSTONE, 2003
634-661..... 7

Wanted
IMAGE, 2003
1..... 12
1/A..... 9
1/B..... 8
1/C..... 3
1/D..... 6
1/E..... 5
2..... 3
2/B..... 4
2/C..... 5
3..... 3
3/A..... 4
4-6..... 3

War Is Hell
MARVEL, 1973
1..... 25
2..... 18
3-5..... 14
6-8..... 10
9-15..... 8

Warlock
MARVEL, 1972
1..... 32
2-3..... 15
4-5..... 8
6-8..... 7
9-11..... 10
12..... 8
12/30¢..... 15
13..... 8
13/30¢..... 15
14..... 8
14/30¢..... 15
15..... 8

Warlord
DC, 1976
1..... 10
2..... 4
3-6..... 3
7-29..... 2
30-47..... 1
48..... 2
49-130..... 1
131..... 2
132..... 1
133..... 2
Ann 1..... 3
Ann 2-6..... 1

Warlord
DC, 1992
1-6..... 2

Warlord
DC, 2006
1-10..... 3

Watchmen
DC, 1986
1..... 20
➥Moore, Gibbons series
2-3..... 10
4-12..... 8

Way of the Rat
CROSSGEN, 2002
1-24..... 3

Weapon X
MARVEL, 1995
1-4..... 2

Weapon X
MARVEL, 2002
1-8..... 2
9-28..... 3

Web of Horror
MAJOR MAGAZINES, 1969
1-3..... 30
➥1st Wrightson cvr

Web of Spider-Man
MARVEL, 1985
1..... 8
2..... 6
3..... 5
4-10..... 4
11-28..... 3
29..... 5
30..... 4
31-32..... 5
33-35..... 3
36..... 4
37..... 3
38..... 5
39-47..... 3
48..... 8
➥1st Demogoblin
49..... 2
50..... 3
51-57..... 2
58..... 3
59..... 8
60-61..... 3
62-89..... 2
90..... 5
91-99..... 2
100..... 4
101-105..... 2
106/CS..... 5
106..... 1
107-113..... 2
113/CS..... 4
114-116..... 2
117..... 3
117/Variant ... 5
118..... 3
119..... 2
119/CS..... 6
120..... 4
121-124..... 2
125..... 3
125/Variant ... 4
126-129..... 2
129/CS..... 5
Ann 1..... 7
Ann 2..... 6
Ann 3-10..... 3
SS 1..... 4

Weird Fantasy
E.C., 1950
1..... 1150
2..... 500
3-4..... 425
5..... 335
6-10..... 240
11-13..... 180
14..... 300
15..... 200
16-19..... 170
20..... 200
21..... 285
22..... 140

Weird Mystery Tales
DC, 1972
1..... 30
2..... 20
3..... 15
4-10..... 12
11-20..... 10
21..... 15
22-24..... 10

Weird Science
E.C., 1950
1..... 1450
2..... 625
3-4..... 575
5-10..... 360
11-14..... 230
15-18..... 260
19-22..... 335

Weird Science-Fantasy
E.C., 1954
23-24..... 235
25..... 270
26..... 220
27..... 235
28..... 260
29..... 450

Weird Science-Fantasy Annual
E.C., 1952
1..... 2000
2..... 1200

Weird Suspense
ATLAS-SEABOARD, 1975
1..... 12
2..... 8
3..... 7

Weird Terror
COMIC MEDIA, 1952
1..... 500
2-4..... 300
5..... 230
6..... 260
7..... 230
8..... 260
9-10..... 200
11..... 260
12..... 190
13..... 200

Weird War Tales
DC, 1971
1..... 125
2..... 75
3..... 45
4-5..... 30
6-10..... 20
11-20..... 12
21-31..... 8
32-50..... 6
51-92..... 5
93..... 6
94-101..... 5
102-124..... 4

Weird Western Tales
DC, 1972
12..... 45
13..... 30
14-15..... 20
16-28..... 12
29..... 16
30-42..... 8
43-50..... 6
51-70..... 5

Weird Wonder Tales
MARVEL, 1973
1..... 14
2-3..... 7
4-7..... 5
8-15..... 4
15/30¢..... 20
16..... 4
16/30¢..... 20
17..... 4
17/30¢..... 20
18-22..... 4

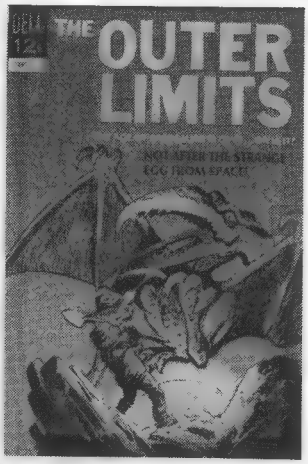
Weird Worlds
DC, 1972
1..... 12
2-5..... 7
6..... 8
7..... 6
8-10..... 5

Werewolf By Night
MARVEL, 1972
1..... 80
2..... 30
3..... 15
4..... 18

Two-Fisted-Werewolf $3

Original Art

Dell cover "paintings"



I have often been fascinated by the multitude of techniques used to produce color in comic books. Before computer coloring arrived, colorists employed all sorts of strategies to indicate coloring to the printers. I thought I had seen all of them until a friend called recently to have me help him sell some art. Included in the group were preliminary paintings for Dell comic-book covers.

Throughout the 1950s, Dell was noted for featuring high-quality paintings, often by major illustrators, on many of its covers. When the art arrived, I was surprised to discover that the "prelims" were from the late 1960s, when Dell had split from Western Printing & Lithographing (which continued its comic-book line as Gold Key) and only had line-drawn covers!

The prelims turned out not to be preliminaries at all, but color guides for such titles as *Ghost Stories, Outer Limits,* and *Superheroes.* The color guides were created by printing Mylar copies of the line art the same size as the published comic. The Mylar was then painted on the back to indicate the colors. The finished colored art was sometimes laid atop a flat background, which was sometimes airbrushed — and, other times, on sheets of colored paper. The entire final production was matted under two mats — the inner one usually covered with notes.

Given the number of covers, this seems to have been a normal practice for Dell during this period.

*— **George Hagenauer** reports on the original art market for **CBG**. Write him at **yellowkd@merr.com**.*

Ultimate Spider-Man Annual #3

Marvel

$3.99, color, 48 pgs.

Writer: Brian Michael Bendis

Artist: David Lafuente

reviewed by **Andrew Wahl**

★★½

Should Peter Parker and Mary Jane do "it"? It's a question that's long been moot in the main Marvel universe, thanks first to marriage and then Mephisto. But in the Ultimate universe, where the couple is still in high school, the question has fresh resonance. And it's just the kind of topic you'd expect Brian Michael Bendis — the writer of this character-driven series from Day One — to tackle.

Unfortunately, the actual story doesn't live up to the hype. Part of the problem is that the character drama takes a backseat to a weak action tale introducing the Ultimate Mysterio.

The Peter-and-MJ part of the story also lacks a bit of dramatic tension (not to give anything away, but the book is "rated A" for all ages), and its outcome doesn't ring true. Given what these characters have seen and already experienced together, regular teen hang-ups just seem a little small.

www.marvel.com

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Werewolf By Night
CONTINUED
5-10 15
11-14 12
15. 15
16-17 12
18-20 10
21-31 8
32. 60
➥1st Moon Knight
33. 30
34. 8
35-36 5
37. 10
38. 5
38/30¢ 15
39. 5
39/30¢ 15
40-41 5
42. 12
43. 18

Western Roundup
DELL, 1952
1. 165
2. 120
3-5 75
6-10 65
11-17 55
18. 65
19-23 55
24. 60
25. 80

What If...?
MARVEL, 1977
1. 15
2. 10
3-5 8
6-10 5
11-12 4
13. 5
14-15 4
16. 3
17. 4
18-26 3
27. 5
28. 8
29. 3
30-31 8
32-34 3
35. 5
36-45 3
46. 4
47. 3
Special 1 4

What If...?
MARVEL, 1989
-1 2
1. 4
2-20 3
21-23 2
24. 4
25. 3
26-49 2
50. 3
51-104 2
105. 12
106-114 3

Where Creatures Roam
MARVEL, 1970
1. 25
2-8 10

Where Monsters Dwell
MARVEL, 1970
1. 32
2-5 10
6-11 8
12. 10
13-31 8
32-38 7

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Whiz Comics
FAWCETT, 1940
1. 70000
➥1st Captain Marvel
2. 5200
3. 3400
4. 2800
5. 2250
6. 1650
7. 1725
8-9 1650
10. 1250
11-12 1100
13-14 1075
15. 1250
16-18 1100
19-20 750
21. 800
22-24 600
25. 6200
➥1st Capt. Marvel Jr.
26. 550
27-30 525
31-32 460
33. 525
34. 365
35. 410
36-40 365
41-43 260
44. 300
45-50 260
51-60 210
61-70 175
71-82 150
83-100 130
101-120 110
121-152 100
153-155 200

WildC.A.T.s
IMAGE, 1992
0. 3
1. 4
1/3D 5
1/Gold 10
1/Variant 5

WildC.A.T.s
CONTINUED
2-10 3
11. 15
11/Holofoil . . . 22
12. 8
13. 6
14-24 3
25. 5
26-49 3
50. 4
50/Variant 5
Ann 1 3
Special 1 4

Wild Frontier
CHARLTON, 1955
1. 60
2-6 40
7. 50

Witchblade
IMAGE, 1995
½ 15
1. 25
1/B 15
2. 18
2/A 15
3. 10
4-5 8
6-10 6
10/Dynamic . . 20
10/Variants. . . 28
11-14 4
14/Gold 6
15. 4
16-18/A 3
18/Am Ent 5
19-24 3
24/Variant 5
25. 3
25/A 4
25/B 8
25/C 15

RETROVIEW

Killraven #5

★★★½

"Carmilla" • "Skarlett" • "Hawk"

After repelling an attack on a village of rebels, Killraven and his team learn how to destroy the Martian citadel. On the way to do so, however, Killraven is betrayed.

It took five issues, but there's finally an endgame in sight with Killraven now focused on wiping out the largest Martian concentration on Earth.

As predicted, John, the boy Killraven saved in the first issue, has proven to be an invaluable asset, since he's the only one who can understand and master Martian technology. Other events this issue have their analogs in the earlier adventures and it's good to see those acknowledged.

Marvel
Apr 2003 • 23 pp.
Writer: Alan Davis
Pencils: Davis
Inks: Mark Farmer
Cover: Davis, Farmer

Best CGC copy: **9.8**

Then $2.99 NOW $3

© Marvel

UNSLABBED Near Mint

26-29 3
29/Variant 5
30-32 3
32/Variant . . . 15
33-41 3
41/A 10
42-49 3
50. 5
50/Dynamic . . 15
50/Autographed30
50/Variants. . . . 5
51-74 3
75-75/Variant . . 5
76-80 3
80/Holiday 5
80/Variants. . . . 3
80/Conv 5
81-91 3
92. 5
93-99 3
100/All 5
101-102 3
500. 5

Witches Tales
HARVEY, 1951
1. 310
2. 260
3-10 210
11-16 190
17-19 225
20-24 190
25-28 165

Witching Hour
DC, 1969
1. 150
2. 70
3. 50
4-6 25
7. 18
8-13 15
14-51 10
52-66 8
67-85 5

Wolverine
MARVEL, 1982
1. 25
2. 18
3. 17
4. 16

Wolverine
MARVEL, 1988
-1 2
½ 3
½/Ltd. 8
1. 10
2. 6
3-5 5

UNSLABBED Near Mint

6. 4
7-9 5
10. 8
11-14 4
15. 5
16-19 4
20. 5
21-23 4
24-40 3
41. 4
42. 2
43. 3
44. 2
45-49 3
50. 4
51-56 2
57. 3
58-74 2
75. 4
76-79 2
80. 8
81-84 2
85. 3
85/Variant 4
86-87 2
87/Deluxe. 4
88. 2
88/Deluxe. 4
89. 2
89/Deluxe. 4
90. 2
90/Deluxe. 4
91-98 2
99. 4
100. 5
100/Variant . . . 8
101-124 2
125. 4
125/A-125/B. . 10
126-130 2
131. 5
131/A 3
132-133 2
133/Variant . . . 4
134-144 2
145. 4
145/Gold foil . 25
145/DF 50
145/Silver foil. 30
145/Nabisco. 400
146. 5
147-149 2
150. 3
150/Dynamic . 14
151-165 2
166. 3
167-189 2
Ann 1995 4
Ann 1996-Ann 1997. 3
Ann 1999-Ann 2000. 4

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Ann 2001 3
Special 1 4

Wolverine
MARVEL, 2003
1. 7
2. 5
3. 4
4-9 3
10. 2
11-15 3
16. 2
17. 3
18-20 2
20/Variant . . . 90
➥Retailer incentive
20/Texas. 20
➥Texas con premium
21-26 2
26/Silvestri. . . 15
26/DF 20
27. 2
27/Quesada . . 25
28-29 2
30-35 3
36. 5
36/Quesada . . 12
37-41 3
42. 12
43-49 3
50. 4

Wolverine: Origins
MARVEL, 2006
1-24 3

Wolverine: The End
MARVEL, 2004
1. 7
1/Texas. 15
2. 6
3. 5
4. 4
5-6 3

Wolverine: The Origin
MARVEL, 2001
1. 25
1/Dynamic . . . 50
2. 12
2/Dynamic . . . 24
3. 8
3/Dynamic . . . 20
4. 5
4/Dynamic . . . 20
5. 4
5/Dynamic . . . 20
6. 5
6/Dynamic . . . 20

UNSLABBED Near Mint

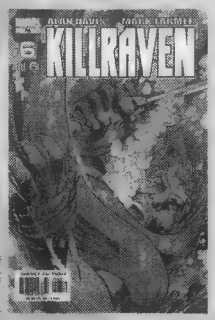
Wonder Woman
DC, 1942
1. 17000
2. 3100
3. 1900
4. 1200
5. 1050
6-10 900
11-20 650
21-23 450
24. 600
25. 450
26-30 425
31-40 415
41-44 400
45. 500
46-50 400
51-60 310
61-70 240
71-79 190
80-90 155
91-100 120
101-104 90
105. 600
➥1st Wonder Girl
106-110 80
111-130 70
131-149 56
150-159 50
160-161 30
162. 40
163-170 30
171-180 25
181-190 33
191-200 40
201-210 14
211. 25
➥100-page issue
212-213 11
214. 30
➥100-page issue
215-218 11
219-236 7
237-260 6
261-268 5
269-279 4
280. 3
281-283 5
284-299 3
300. 6
301-329 3

Wonder Woman
DC, 1987
0. 6
1. 4
2-10/A 3
11-84 2
85. 10
➥1st Deodato art

RETROVIEW

Killraven #6

★★★★



© Marvel

"M'shulla" • "Raven"

Grok reveals his plan to take over from his fellow Martians, and Killraven learns the truth behind the Martian invasion.

Alan Davis wraps up this mini-series with a great final chapter, but it took way too long to get there.

Readers familiar with the original *Amazing Adventures* run may have enjoyed some of the elements here, but not the slow pace that was obviously designed for the inevitable trade paperback.

The conclusion is, to say the least, unexpected. It's not a *Planet of the Apes* revelation, but it's indicative of how attitudes have changed since the 1970s.

Marvel
May 2003 • 23 pp.
Writer: Alan Davis
Pencils: Davis
Inks: Mark Farmer
Cover: Davis, Farmer

Near mint CGC copy: **9.8** Then $2.99 NOW $3

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86. . . . 4
87-93. . . . 3
94-99. . . . 2
100. . . . 3
100/Variant . . . 4
101-119. . . . 2
120. . . . 3
121-139. . . . 2
139/Ltd. . . . 15
140-199. . . . 2
200. . . . 4
201-213. . . . 2
214. . . . 25
➥Inf. Crisis tie
215. . . . 10
216. . . . 7
217. . . . 6
218. . . . 5
219. . . . 15
➥Max Lord dies
219/2nd . . . 3
➥2nd print
220. . . . 12
221-1000000 . . 3
Ann 1-2 2
Ann 3 3
Ann 4 4
Ann 5 3
Ann 6 4
Ann 7-8 3
Special 1 2

Woody Woodpecker
DELL, 1952

16-20. . . . 14
21-50. . . . 12
51-72. . . . 9
73-75. . . . 25
76-100. . . . 15
101-120. . . . 10
121-130. . . . 6
131-170. . . . 3
171-187. . . . 2
188-189. . . . 10
190-191. . . . 25
193-201. . . . 15

World's Best Comics
DC, 1941

1. . . . 18000

World's Finest Comics
DC, 1941

2. . . . 4000
3. . . . 2900
4-5. . . . 1975
6-7. . . . 1450
8. . . . 1275
9. . . . 1300
10. . . . 1050
11-16. . . . 895
17. . . . 875
18-20. . . . 805
21-30. . . . 610
31-40. . . . 530
41-60. . . . 430
61-64. . . . 320
65. . . . 540
66-70. . . . 370
71. . . . 900
➥1st Sup/Bat team
72-73. . . . 550
74-80. . . . 375
81-90. . . . 235
91-93. . . . 175
94. . . . 525
➥Sup/Bat team origin
95-99. . . . 175
100. . . . 260
101-110. . . . 105
111-121. . . . 85
122-142. . . . 75
143-150. . . . 52
151-152. . . . 50
153-155. . . . 45
156. . . . 55
➥Bizarro, Joker app
157-161. . . . 45
162-177. . . . 38
178-180. . . . 30
181-190. . . . 25
191-197. . . . 20
➥Sup/Flash race
198-199. . . . 80
➥Sup/Flash race
200-212. . . . 16
213-228. . . . 14
229-270. . . . 6
271-300. . . . 4
301-323. . . . 3

Worlds of Fear
FAWCETT, 1952

2. . . . 325
3. . . . 250
4-9. . . . 200
10. . . . 475

Worlds Unknown
MARVEL, 1973

1. . . . 17
2. . . . 10
3. . . . 7
4-8. . . . 5

Xenozoic Tales
KITCHEN SINK, 1987

1. . . . 8
2-5. . . . 6
6-10. . . . 5
11-14. . . . 4

X-Factor
MARVEL, 1986

-1. . . . 2
1. . . . 3
2-4. . . . 2
5. . . . 3
6. . . . 5
7. . . . 3
8-22. . . . 2
23. . . . 5
24. . . . 8
25-49. . . . 2
50-53. . . . 3
54-59. . . . 2
60-69. . . . 3
70-91. . . . 2
92. . . . 4
93-105. . . . 2
106/Variant . . . 3
107-124. . . . 2
125. . . . 3
126-129. . . . 2
130. . . . 3
131-149. . . . 2
Ann 1-6 3
Ann 7. . . . 2
Ann 8-9 3

X-Files
TOPPS, 1995

-2--1. . . . 10
0/A-0/C. . . . 4
1. . . . 8
2. . . . 5
3-4. . . . 4
5-33. . . . 3
33/Variant 5
34-41/Variant . . 3
Ann 1-Ashcan 1 4
Special 1-5. . . . 5

X-Force
MARVEL, 1991

-1-1/E. . . . 2
2. . . . 3
3-24. . . . 2
25. . . . 3
26-30. . . . 2
31-33. . . . 1
34-38. . . . 2
38/Variant 3
39-49/Deluxe . . 2
50. . . . 3
50/A. . . . 4
51-98. . . . 2
99. . . . 3
100-129. . . . 2
Ann 1-Ann 3. . . 3
Ann 1995. . . . 4
Ann 1996-Ann 1997. . . . 3
Ann 1998-Ann 1999. . . . 4

X-Men
MARVEL, 1963

1. . . . 7000
➥1st X-Men
2. . . . 1900
3. . . . 1030
4. . . . 900
5. . . . 550
6. . . . 500
7. . . . 475
8-10. . . . 360
11. . . . 300
12. . . . 500
➥1st Juggernaut
13. . . . 275
14. . . . 250
15-16. . . . 190
17-20. . . . 100
21-27. . . . 90
28. . . . 155
➥1st Banshee
29-34. . . . 90
35. . . . 150
➥Spider-Man app.
36-37. . . . 65
38. . . . 80
39-40. . . . 90
41-48. . . . 65
49-51. . . . 75
52. . . . 65
53-57. . . . 72
58. . . . 100
➥1st Havok
59-65. . . . 70
66. . . . 80
➥Last new issue
67-80. . . . 35
81-85. . . . 40
86-93. . . . 35
94. . . . 500
➥2nd New X-Men
95. . . . 85
➥Thunderbird dies
96. . . . 55
97-98. . . . 48
98/30¢ 125
99. . . . 48
99/30¢ 125
100. . . . 60
➥Phoenix orig. starts
100/30¢ 135
101. . . . 55
➥Phoenix origin
102-105. . . . 28
105/35¢ 60
106. . . . 28
106/35¢ 60
107. . . . 28
107/35¢ 60
108. . . . 35
➥1st Byrne X-Men
109. . . . 30
➥1st Weapon alpha
110-115. . . . 20
116-119. . . . 16
➥1st Alpha Flight
120-121. . . . 28
122-128. . . . 12
129. . . . 20
130-135. . . . 12
136. . . . 11
137. . . . 14
➥Phoenix dies
138. . . . 8
139-141. . . . 11
➥Future Past

X-Men
MARVEL, 1991

-1. . . . 3
-1/A 4
1/Beast. . . . 5
1/Colossus. . . . 3
1/Cyclops. . . . 4
1/Magneto 3
1/Collector's. . . 5
2. . . . 4
3-20. . . . 3
21-24. . . . 2
25. . . . 5
25/Gold 25
25/Ltd. . . . 30
26-29. . . . 2
30. . . . 3
31-49. . . . 2
50. . . . 3
50/Variant 4
51-54. . . . 2
54/Silver. . . . 25
55-62. . . . 2
62/A 3
63-79. . . . 2
80. . . . 3
80/Holofoil . . . 10
80/DF. . . . 7
81-98. . . . 2
99-100/G 3
101-104. . . . 2
105. . . . 3
106-113. . . . 2
114. . . . 5
115-144. . . . 2
145-147. . . . 3
148. . . . 2
149. . . . 3
150. . . . 4
151. . . . 3
152. . . . 2
153-157. . . . 3
158. . . . 2
159. . . . 3
160-164. . . . 2
165. . . . 3
166-169. . . . 2
170-Ann 3 3
Ann 1995. . . . 4
Ann '96-'98 . . . 3
Ann '99-'01 . . . 4
Ashcan 1 1

X-Men: Age of Apocalypse
MARVEL, 2005

1. . . . 4
2-6. . . . 3

X-O Manowar
VALIANT, 1992

0. . . . 2
0/Gold 35
½. . . . 8
½/Gold. . . . 55
1. . . . 7
2-4. . . . 6
5. . . . 5
6. . . . 4
7-8. . . . 3
9. . . . 2
10-15. . . . 1
15/Pink. . . . 8
16-27. . . . 1
28. . . . 2
29-35. . . . 1
36. . . . 2
37-41. . . . 1
42-54. . . . 2
55-62. . . . 3
63-65. . . . 4
66. . . . 5
67. . . . 7
68. . . . 12
YB 1. . . . 4

Young Allies Comics
TIMELY, 1941

1. . . . 11500
2. . . . 3000
3. . . . 2100
4. . . . 3000
5. . . . 1300
6-8. . . . 875
9. . . . 900
10. . . . 875
11-14. . . . 720
15-20. . . . 615

Young Avengers
MARVEL, 2005

1. . . . 10
1/DirCut 6
1/Conv 15
2. . . . 7
3. . . . 4
4-12. . . . 3

Young Justice
DC, 1998

1. . . . 4
2-49. . . . 3
50. . . . 4
51-55. . . . 3
1000000. . . . 4
GS 1. . . . 5

Young Love
DC, 1963

39. . . . 30
40-50. . . . 24
51-70. . . . 20
71-90. . . . 14
91-100. . . . 10
101-106. . . . 7
107. . . . 25
108-114. . . . 20
115-126. . . . 12

Young Men
MARVEL, 1950

4. . . . 120
5-10. . . . 70
11-23. . . . 52
24. . . . 1600
➥Cap, Namor origin
25. . . . 775
26-28. . . . 750

Young Romance
DC, 1963

125. . . . 42
126-140. . . . 18
141-150. . . . 15
151-159. . . . 12
160-170. . . . 10
171-197. . . . 9
198-201. . . . 20
202-208. . . . 8

Y: The Last Man
DC, 2002

1. . . . 30
2. . . . 15
3. . . . 5
4-5. . . . 4
6-52. . . . 3

Zip Comics
M.L.J., 1940

1. . . . 3500
2. . . . 1600
3. . . . 1250
4-5. . . . 900
6-8. . . . 750
9. . . . 800
10. . . . 750
11-17. . . . 600
18. . . . 625
19. . . . 600
20. . . . 900
21-26. . . . 540
27. . . . 800
28-30. . . . 540
31-40. . . . 375
41-47. . . . 280

Zoo Funnies
CHILDREN COMICS, 1945

1. . . . 120
2-3. . . . 70
4-6. . . . 60
7-9. . . . 52
10-12. . . . 40
13-15. . . . 38

Zorro
DELL, 1959

8-9. . . . 70
10-12. . . . 68
13-15. . . . 65

Zorro
GOLD KEY, 1966

1. . . . 70
2-4. . . . 38
5-7. . . . 34
8-9. . . . 28

ZZZ
ALAN BUNCE, 2000

1. . . . 3

See more price guide info at CBGXtra.com!

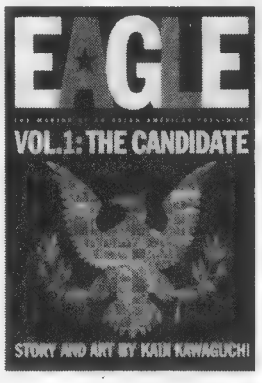
Werewolf-Zzz

Tony's Back Page

Eagle Vol. 1

For the time being, "Tony's Back Page" has switched from sterling tales of my life to extended coverage of comic books scheduled to appear in my forthcoming book, *1,000 Comic Books You Must Read*. Because I'll use any excuse to read and write about great and not-so-great comic books that I find.

Eagle: Vol. 1
Writer: Kaiji Kawaguchi
Artist: Kaiji Kawaguchi
Viz (February 2000 © 2000 Kaiji Kawaguchi/ Shogakukan, Inc.)



Set during the 2000 Presidential Campaign, "The Making of an Asian-American President" follows the campaign of Senator Kenneth Yamaoka (D-NY), a third-generation Japanese-American. Among the characters who appear in this manga series are fictionalized counterparts of President Bill Clinton, First Lady Hilary Clinton, and Vice-President Al Gore.

Kawaguchi was reportedly inspired by his viewing of *The War Room*, a documentary about Clinton's 1992 campaign.

Eagle was originally published from 1997 to 2001 in *Big Comic*, a semi-monthly Japanese *seinen manga* anthology. *Seinen manga* is a genre of manga aimed at male readers 18-30 years old.

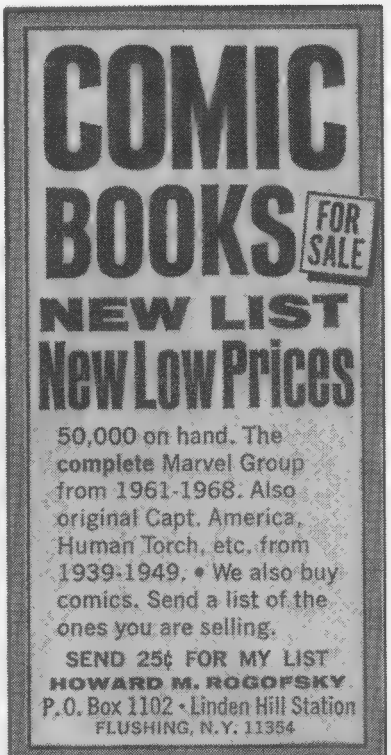
Running 22 volumes and 2,000 pages, this thrilling epic offers a different perspective on American politics. It was nominated for five Eisner Awards: Best New Series, Best Continuing Series, Best Writer/Artist, and twice for Best U.S. Edition of Foreign Material.

— *Tony Isabella*

Comics through the mail

How a 25¢ catalog changed my life

by **CHUCK ROZANSKI**



It was 40 years ago last month that an event transpired that changed my life, forever. Amazingly, this life-changing epiphany occurred at a cost of a mere 25¢. That was the charge, in 1969, for receiving the Robert Bell mail-order catalog. I'm sure that those of you who collect older comics can recall seeing Robert Bell's hundreds of ads in the Marvel comics classified ad pages. Bell, along with Howard Rogofsky, Passaic Book Center, Grand Book Center, and several others, made available the first mass-produced price lists for old comics.

While it may seem mundane today, the truth is that there were no established prices for older comics in 1969. Those of us who were comics fans in those dark ages tended to live in isolated pockets and only interact with a few other local fans. When an older or particularly rare comic book showed up, setting a price for it tended to be completely speculative, with the owner's subjective opinion about the relative scarcity of any given issue acting as the sole basis for the asking price. Bell's incredible catalog of Marvel prices changed that reality and instantly altered my life's path as a direct result.

To set the stage for further explanation of my epiphany, I need to explain that I was living on an American Army base in Frankfurt, Germany, in the spring of 1969. I had two friends: Ron Baker and Ford Curry, who attended the same American Forces Junior High School as I did. As a result, the three of us spent a lot of time together discussing the latest Marvel releases. Stan had us so completely enthralled in the coolness of being Marvel readers (Who could possibly *not* want to be a member of the Merry Marvel Marching Society?) that the only DC comics we avidly collected were Jim Shooter's Legion of Super-Heroes stories in *Action Comics*. That's precisely why, when Ford made his fateful decision to risk sending Robert Bell his quarter (a quarter would buy two new comics in 1969), all three of us waited with eager anticipation to see what the catalog contained.

Bell's catalog was particularly important to us, since, unlike the catalogs from other advertisers in the comics classifieds, Bell specialized in selling only back issues of Marvel comics. Those were exactly what each of us so desperately desired in those days, since all three of us had logged hundreds of hours walking the stairwells of the huge Army-owned apartment blocks in which we lived, knocking on doors and seeking others with whom to trade comics. With no American TV available on our Army base, comics reading and trading were popular with kids and adults. Since Ron, Ford, and I were all pretty near destitute (my allowance was $1 per month), it was only through astute trading that the three of us had been able to slowly build collections of 1964-1969 Marvels. Those key older Marvel issues from 1961-1963, however, were never in people's trading boxes. Could Robert Bell possibly have any of *them* for sale, and, if so, could we possibly afford them? Those were the questions that we wanted so desperately to have answered when we gathered at Ford's family's apartment to open the fateful envelope.

From the minute we began avidly scanning Robert Bell's incredible catalog, the lives of all three of us immediately changed. In our 14-year-old minds, it was as if the door to Heaven had suddenly opened. Never again would we be constrained into thinking that the possibility might exist that there were rare Marvel comics that we would never be able to obtain. Since Bell's list offered every Marvel comic book printed since *Fantastic Four* #1, completing our Marvel comics collections instantly became a mere question of cost, not availability. That said, I do need to explain how my reaction to Bell's catalog differed completely from Ron's and Ford's. The two of them were dyed-in-the-wool comics fanboys. From the minute that they saw

those lists of prices for all the Marvel titles, they desperately wanted to own all of the comics they did not yet have in their collections.

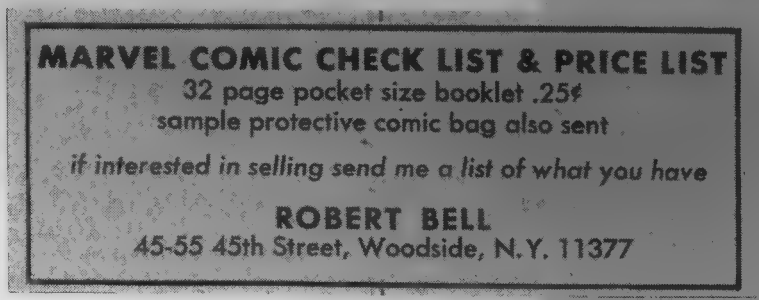
In direct contrast, from the minute I saw the price list, I desperately wanted *to be Robert Bell.* As anyone who has followed my career in comics already knows, to say that the rest is history is an understatement.

Fast-forward 40 years, and I now operate MileHighComics.com, a website which is arguably the largest online comics retailer database. When I compare the hundreds of thousands of different comics titles, issue numbers, and grades that we offer via our website to Robert Bell's tiny selection in his little pamphlets, I have to smile at the innocent simplicity of life in 1969. At the same time, I also have to admit that I am so overwhelmed these days, by the complexity of the huge amount of data that I am trying to keep updated and fresh, that despair is never far off. Consider, for example, the effort required to update our website prices. I try to alter all of our prices each year to reflect the changes in market conditions reported in the annual comic-book price guides. Given that our database is so much larger than any of the price guides, however, I find myself in the unenviable position of having to, not only write the equivalent of a complete price guide each year, but also update prices on the many tens of thousands of smaller-press comics that none of the price guides lists.

Complicating matters even further, in today's economic downturn, I have been forced to work doubly hard, adapting our operations to current market conditions at a frenetic pace. Most days I start work at 5 a.m. and am still trying to finish tasks on my laptop at 9 p.m. While I have certainly seen a positive payoff on the investment of my time in Milé High Comics, the extreme effort required to keep our database current has forced me to temporarily give up a great many things that I personally enjoy, including sometimes writing this column on a monthly basis. It's not that I don't have any more to say about the world of comics or that I am any less passionate in my opinions. It's just that I can only give up so much sleep and still maintain the ability to construct reasonable prose.

Where I'm coming to with all this is an apology to all of you who have told me at conventions that my columns are among the first pages you turn to when you receive your new issue of ***CBG***. I absolutely feel that I have let you down by not being able to keep up with my monthly deadlines.

Simply put, however, the stresses of dealing with today's economy have made it hard for me to find the time and/or energy to construct a monthly column. In that regard, however, I do not think that I am in any different position from all other comics retailers — or, for that matter, independent retailers of *all* persuasions.



These are unusual times, of extreme complexity, for the small-business people who form the economic underpinnings of free enterprise in America. We are all having to work far harder, and smarter, to survive.

I am certain that our world is going to return to normal at some point and that those of us who survive this experience are going to have great new war stories to tell. Getting from here to there, however, is going to require a great deal of extra focus. All that I can promise you is that I will do my absolute best to keep writing this column each month. That said, I do ask for your forbearance during those times when I just can't get the job done. I'll be back on a monthly schedule for you as soon as things stabilize.

These are unusual times, of extreme complexity, for the small-business people who form the economic underpinnings of free enterprise in America

I'll close this month's column by encouraging all of you to go out of your way to support your local comics retailer. Whether or not their pride allows them to admit it, a great many comics retailers are struggling financially these days. I don't think that many are in danger of actually folding, but salaries have been cut severely, if they can pay themselves at all. If everyone reading this column were to chip in just an extra $5 per week into his or her local comics economy, I'm certain that we could make a collective difference. Not only might a few more comics retailers survive this current downturn, but that added revenue might well help to keep a few more small publishers in business.

Good things happen in this world because good people do not sit on their hands in times of difficulty. They are proactive in seeking to preserve that in their world which is important to them. I would hope that helping your local comics retailer would be very important to you.

Simply put: I would caution you against taking for granted survival of the comics world. Our wonderful world only exists because of a complex series of interdependencies, and this economic downturn could well threaten the long-term survival of much that we hold dear.

CHUCK ROZANSKI, owner of Mile High Comics, the world's largest online retail store, has been with CBG since the beginning, his first ad appearing in #8 in 1971. Be sure to write him at *chuck@milehighcomics.com*, and check out his website at *www.milehighcomics.com!*

Convention Calendar

The most complete listing of comics events anywhere!

To have your event included, fax your listing to Lisa Dombrowski at ***CBG* Con Calendar,** (715) 445-4087. The e-mail is *showscalendar@krause.com.*

ARIZONA

Jul 25 AZ, Phoenix. In The Heat Railroad Swap Meet, North Phoenix Baptist Church. 5757 N. Central Ave., SH: 9am-1pm, F: $25., A: $5. David Jerry, PH: 602-361-0356.

Sep 19 AZ, Phoenix. Mary Anne's Toy Fest, North Phoenix Baptist Church. 5757 N. Central Ave., SH: 9am-2pm, T: 100, F: $35., A: $3. 3652 Productions, Jim Grimes & Mary Anne Grimes, PH: 602-267-9526.

Jul 15 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book

CALIFORNIA

& Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 3pm-9pm, T: 250, A: free. Johnny Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Jul 18 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 9am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Johnny Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Jul 22-26 CA, San Diego. Comic-Con International, Convention Center. Comic-Con International, PO Box 128458, San Diego, CA 92112. PH: 619-491-2475.

Jul 22 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 3pm-9pm, T: 250, A: free. Johnny Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Jul 25 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 9am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Johnny Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Jul 29 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 3pm-9pm, T: 250, A: free. Johnny Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Aug 1 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 9am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Johnny Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Aug 5 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 3pm-9pm, T: 250, A: free. Johnny Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Aug 8 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 9am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Johnny Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Aug 9 CA, Stanton-Orange County. NASCAR, NHRA, Hot Wheels & Die Cast Car Show, Rack & Cue. 7520 Katella Ave., SH: 9am-2pm, A: $2., under 12 free. Ron, PH: 909-902-0217.

Aug 12 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 3pm-9pm, T: 250, A: free. Johnny Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

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Aug 19 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 3pm-9pm, T: 250, A: free. Johnny Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Aug 22 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 9am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Johnny Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Aug 22 CA, San Jose. Super Toy, Comic & Record Show, Santa Clara County Fairgrounds. 344 Tully Rd., SH: 11am-4pm, F: $75., A: $5. Time Tunnel Toys, 532 S. Bascom Ave., San Jose, CA 95128. PH: 408-298-1709. artapartment@yahoo.com

Aug 26 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 3pm-9pm, T: 250, A: free. Johnny Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

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Sep 2 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 3pm-9pm, T: 250, A: free. Johnny Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

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Sep 13 CA, Stanton-Orange County. NASCAR, NHRA, Hot Wheels & Die Cast Car Show, Rack & Cue. 7520 Katella Ave., SH: 9am-2pm, A: $2., under 12 free. Ron, PH: 909-902-0217.

Sep 16 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 3pm-9pm, T: 250, A: free. Johnny Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Sep 19 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 9am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Johnny Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

DELAWARE

Jul 19 DE, Newark. Sports Card, Comic Book, & Collectible Show, Aetna Fire Hall. 400 Ogletown Rd., SH: 10am-3pm, T: 50, A: $2, 12 & under free. PH: 302-559-7962. a2zshows1@yahoo.com

Jul 26 DE, Dover. Antique & Collectible Free Extravaganza, Spence's Bazaar. 550 S. New St., SH: 9am-4pm, Raindate: Aug 2. PH: 856-228-7681 or 302-222-3030 or www.toyshows.org

Aug 23 DE, Newark. Sports Card, Comic Book, & Collectible Show, Aetna Fire Hall. 400 Ogletown Rd., SH: 10am-3pm, T: 50, A: $2, 12 & under free. PH: 302-559-7962. a2zshows1@yahoo.com

GEORGIA

Sep 4-7 GA, Atlanta. Dragon*Con 2009, Hilton, Hyatt Regency, Marriott Marquis, & Sheraton Hotel.A: $70.-$100. Dragon*Con, PH: 770-909-0115. dragoncon@dragoncon.org

ILLINOIS

Aug 6-9 IL, Rosemont. Wizard World Chicago, Donald E. Stephens Convention Center. Wizard Conventions, PH: 845-268-2000.

Aug 23 IL, Springfield. Comic Book Convention, Route 66 Hotel & Conference Center. 625 E. Saint Joseph St., SH: 10am-4pm, A: free. Alan, PH: 309-657-1599.

Aug 30 IL, Gurnee. Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn. 6161 W. Grand Ave., SH: 10am-3pm. Jim Libasci, PH; 847-336-9963.

Sep 18-20 IL, East Peoria. Boomerfest 2009, Events Center. 4200 E. Washington St., T: 200-8'. Younger Than Yesterday, Craig Moore, PH: 309-682-1116. youngernow@ameritech.net

INDIANA

Aug 30 IN, Indianapolis. Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn East. 6990 E. 21st St., SH: 9:30am-3:30pm, A: $4. Andy Holzman, PH: 317-824-9602.

Sep 12 IN, South Bend. Comic Book Show, Comfort Stes. 52933 US 933, SH: 10am-4pm, A: free. Alan, PH: 309-657-1599.

IOWA

Jun 7 IA, Des Moines-Urbandale. Comic Book Convention, Comfort Suites. Living History Farms, 11167 Hickman Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, A: free. Alan, PH: 309-657-1599.

Jun 13 IA, Iowa City. Comic Convention, Travelodge. 2216 N. Dodge St., SH: 10am-4pm, A: free. Alan, PH: 309-657-1599.

KANSAS

Jul 24-26 KS, Topeka. Sports Card Show, Westridge Mall. SH: Fri.-Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 12noon-6pm, T: 40, A: free. Tim Belk, 2811 Joplin St., Joplin, MO 64804. PH: 417-781-4422.

KENTUCKY

Sep 18-20 KY, Fort Mitchell. Pop Culture Con, Drawbridge Convention Center. 2477 Royal Dr., SH: Fri. 1pm-7pm, Sat. 10am-7pm, Sun. 11am-5pm, A: $15.-$25. www.popculturecon.com

Sep 20 KY, Erlanger. Triple Crown Doll Show, Receptions South Inc. 1379 Donaldson Road-RT 236, SH: 10am-4pm, A: $4. Cheryl Harper, PH: 513-467-1575.

MASSACHUSETTS

Aug 2 MA, Westford. Collectables Show, Regency. 219 Littleton Rd., SH: 9am-3pm, A: $2. PH: 978-459-5323.

MICHIGAN

Jul 19 MI, St Clair Shores. Comic & Toy Show, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #1146. 28404 Jefferson, SH: 12noon-4pm, F: $40.-$45., A: $2. John E. Walus, 376 Wellington Crescent, Mt. Clemens, MI 48043. PH: 586-468-0954. jewalus@aol.com

Jul 26 MI, Livonia. X-Trava-Con, Knights of Columbus Hall. 19801 Farmington Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, F: $50., A: $3. Motor City Conventions, Michael Goldman. PH: 248-426-8059.

Aug 23 MI, Livonia. X-Trava-Con, Knights of Columbus Hall. 19801 Farmington Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, F: $50., A: $3. Motor City Conventions, Michael Goldman. PH: 248-426-8059.

Sep 13 MI, St Clair Shores. Comic & Toy Show, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #1146. 28404 Jefferson, SH: 12noon-4pm, F: $40.-$45., A: $2. John E. Walus, 376 Wellington Crescent, Mt. Clemens, MI 48043. PH: 586-468-0954. jewalus@aol.com

Sep 20 MI, Livonia. X-Trava-Con, Knights of Columbus Hall. 19801 Farmington Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, F: $50., A: $3. Motor City Conventions, Michael Goldman. PH: 248-426-8059.

MISSOURI

Aug 2 MO, Shrewsbury. St. Louis Comic & Toy Show, Memorial Post 111. 7300 Lansdowne, SH: 10am-2pm, T: 40, F: $30., A: $2. Tony Gladish, 4253 Fatima Dr. 4, St. Louis, MO 63123. PH: 314-544-2812.

Aug 7-9 MO, Springfield. Sports Card Show, Battlefield Mall. SH: Fri.-Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 12noon-6pm, T: 50, A: free. Tim Belk, 2811 Joplin St., Joplin, MO 64804. PH: 417-781-4422.

Aug 14-16 MO, St. Joseph. Sports Card Show, Easthills Mall. SH: Fri.-Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 12noon-6pm, T: 50, A: free. Tim Belk, 2811 Joplin St., Joplin, MO 64804. PH: 417-781-4422.

Aug 21-23 MO, St Louis. Show, Mid Rivers Mall. T: 50, A: free. Tim Belk, 2811 Joplin St., Joplin, MO 64804. PH: 417-781-4422.

Sep 13 MO, Shrewsbury. St. Louis Comic & Toy Show, Memorial Post 111. 7300 Lansdowne, SH: 10am-2pm, T: 40, F: $30., A: $2. Tony Gladish, 4253 Fatima Dr. 4, St. Louis, MO 63123. PH: 314-544-2812.

NEBRASKA

Jul 17-19 NE, Lincoln. Sports Card Show, Gateway Mall. SH: Fri.-Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 12noon-6pm, T: 40, A: free. Tim Belk, 2811 Joplin St., Joplin, MO 64804. PH: 417-781-4422.

Have you sent in your free convention listing?

NEW JERSEY

Jul 19 NJ, Wayne. Collectors' Toy Show, P.A.L. 1 Pal Dr., off Rt. 23 N., SH: 9am-12:30pm. John Carlisle, Old Toyland Shows, PO Box 1007, Lockport, NY 14095. PH: 716-434-0733.

Aug 2 NJ, Wayne. Comic, Toy & Collectible Show, Co. #1 Firehouse. 97 Parish Dr., SH: 8am-3pm, T: 50, A: $2., under 12 free. Phil De Mario, PO Box 4094, Wayne, NJ 07474. PH: 973-726-9897. pdsales1@aol.com

Aug 16 NJ, Hackensack. Summer Doll Show, Rothman Center of Fairleigh Dickinson Univ. 100 University Plaza, SH: 10am-4pm, T: 350, A: $7. JMK Shows, PH: 352-527-6666 or 201-213-2810.

Aug 28-30 NJ, Wildwood. Comic Book Show, Convention Center. Boardwalk, Fri. 3pm-9pm, Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 10am-5pm, T: 100, F: $175., A: free. RK Promos., Rob or Karen Gomberg, 3 Rachel Ct., Franklin Park, NJ 08823. PH: 732-422-9365. robkarpro@comcast.net

Sep 6 NJ, Wayne. Comic, Toy & Collectible Show, Co. #1 Firehouse. 97 Parish Dr., SH: 8am-3pm, T: 50, A: $2., under 12 free. Phil De Mario, PO Box 4094, Wayne, NJ 07474. PH: 973-726-9897. pdsales1@aol.com

NEW MEXICO

Aug 28-30 NM, Albuquerque. Bubonicon 41 Convention & Show, Grand Airport Hotel. 2910 Yale Blvd. SE. NMSF Conference, PO Box 37257, Albuquerque, NM 87176. Kristen, PH: 505-459-8734 or Craig, PH: 505-266-8905 or www.bubonicon.com

NORTH CAROLINA

Jul 18-19 NC, Charlotte. Toy, Hobby, Sportscard & NASCAR Show, Metrolina Expo Ctr. I-77 N, Exit 16A, SH: Sat. 9am-4pm, Sun. 10am-4pm, T: 225, A: $5., 15 & under free. Inside Pitch Promos., PH: 919-553-4285.

Aug 7-9 NC, Raleigh. 3-Day Sportscard & Mem. Show, Fairgrounds, Kerr Scott Bldg. 1025 Blue Ridge Rd., SH: Fri., 2pm-7pm, Sat. 10am-5pm, Sun. 10am-4pm, T: 200, A: $5., 15 & under free. Inside Pitch Promos., PH: 919-553-4285.

Aug 23 NC, Raleigh. Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn Crabtree. 4100 Glenwood Ave., SH: 10am-4pm, T: 25, A: free. Lyn Anderson, PO Box 99201, Raleigh, NC 27624. PH: 919-844-1758.

Sep 12 NC, Morganton. Comicon, Recreation & Parks Center. 300 Collett St., SH: 10am-5pm, A: $2. adults, $1. for students. Barry, PH: 828-437-4011 or 439-2449. leesams75@yahoo.com

Sep 13 NC, Charlotte. Comicon, Crowne Plaza Hotel. 201 S. McDowell St., SH: 10am-4pm, A: $3., 12 & under free. PH: 704-424-3453 or 803-547-3995. charlotte_comicon@yahoo.com

OHIO

Jul 19 OH, Columbus. Comic Con, Buckeye Hall of Fame Cafe. 1421 Olentangy River Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, T: 47-6', F: $70., A: $3., 6 & under free. Jeff Harper, PO Box 24, Uniontown, OH 44685. PH: 330-499-6056.

Aug 2 OH, Cleveland. Saturday's Child Nostalgia Fest, Quality Inn & Stes-Richfield. 4742 Brecksville Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, T: 57-6', F: $65., A: $3., 6 & under free. Jeff Harper, PO Box 24, Uniontown, OH 44685. PH: 330-499-6056.

Aug 2 OH, Mansfield. Collectible Toy Show, Richland Cty. Fairgrounds. SH: 10am-3pm, T: 150-8', F: $40., A: $2.50, 8 & under free. Kevin Spore, PH: 419-756-3904.

Aug 9 OH, Tallmadge. Cleveland-Akron OH Toy Show, Summit Cty. Fairgrounds. Rt. 91 E. Howe Rd., SH: 9am-12:30pm. John Carlisle, Old Toyland Shows, PO Box 1007, Lockport, NY 14095. PH: 716-434-0733.

Sep 13 OH, Canton. Comic Con, Courtyard-Marriott. 4375 Metro Circle NW, SH: 10am-3pm, T: 28-8', F: $60., A: $2., 6 & under free. Jeff Harper, PO Box 24, Uniontown, OH 44685. PH: 330-499-6056.

PENNSYLVANIA

Sep 6 PA, New Hope. Train Show, Eagle Fire Co. Rt. 202 & Sugar Rd., SH: 8am-12noon, A: $4., under 12 free. Fred Dauncey, 1443 Leonard St., S. Plainfield, NJ 07080. PH: 908-755-7989.

Sep 11-13 PA, Monroeville. Pittsburgh Comicon, Exposition Center. SH: Fri. 10am-7pm, Sat. 10am-6pm, Sun. 10am-5pm, A: $18.-$45., under 8 free. Comics World, Pittsburgh Comicon, 1002 Graham Ave., Windber, PA 15963. PH: 814-467-4116.PH: 814-467-4116. pcomicon@floodcity.net

Sep 13 PA, Essington-Philadelphia. Comic Con, Ramada Airport. 76 Industrial Hwy., SH: 10am-4pm, T: 65, A: $3. Derek Woywood, PO Box 313, Clementon, NJ 08021. PH: 267-251-7491.

TEXAS

Jul 18 TX, Live Oak-San Antonio. Eckman's Card, Comic, & Toy Show, Civic Center. Pat Booker Rd., IH-35 & Loop 1604, SH: 9am-5pm, T: 200, A: $4. Live Oak Civic Center, PH: 210-653-9494.

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Jul 25 VA, Salem. 12th Annual VA Vintage Comic Book Show, Civic Center. 1001 Roanoke Blvd., SH: 10am-5pm, T: 50-8', F: $60., A: $2., duner 12 free. Alum Ridge Industries, 818 Harris Hollow Rd. SW, Floyd, VA 24091. PH: 540-789-7056 or 745-2127. rogermannon@hotmail.com

Aug 2 VA, Dunn Loring. Comics Show, Fire Dept. 2148 Gallows Rd. www.capicons.com

Sep 20 VA, Richmond. Central VA Comic Convention, Crowne Plaza. 6532 W. Broad St., T: 60-6', F: $75., A: $5. vacomicon.com

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Jul 26 WI, West Allis. Comic Book Show, Burnham Bowl. 6016 W. Burnham Ave., SH: 11am-4pm, A: $2. Henry, PH: 414-476-5596 or Clayton, PH: 414-328-3675.

Sep 13 WI, Milwaukee. Orphans In The Attic Doll & Teddy Bear Show, Serb Hall. 5101 W. Oklahoma Ave., SH: 10am-3pm, A: $4., $1.50 ages 6-12. Marge Hansen, 1527 Raveen St., Ft. Atkinson, WI 53538. PH: 920-563-0046.

Sep 13 WI, Milwaukee. Comic Book Convention. Best Western-Airport & Conf. Ctr. 5105 S. Howell Ave., SH: 10am-4pm, A: free. Alan, PH: 309-657-1599.

ONTARIO

Aug 28-30 ON, Toronto. FanExpo, Metro Convention Ctr. 222 Bremner Blvd., SH: Fri. 4pm-9pm, Sat. 10am-7pm, Sun. 11am-6pm, A: $25. Hobby Star Marketing, 38 Riverlea Dr., Toronto, ON M9P 2H4. PH: 416-241-7827. info@hobbystar.com

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Sep 12 BC, Vancouver. Pop Culture Collectibles Fair, Croatian Cultural Centre. 3250 Commercial Dr., SH: 10am-4pm, F: $40., A: free. Verne Siebert, Box 11, 4607 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC V5H 2B3 Canada. PH: 604-521-6304.

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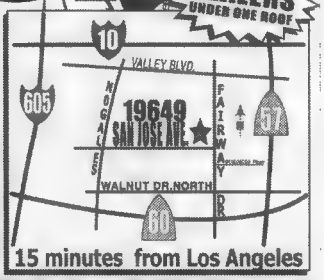

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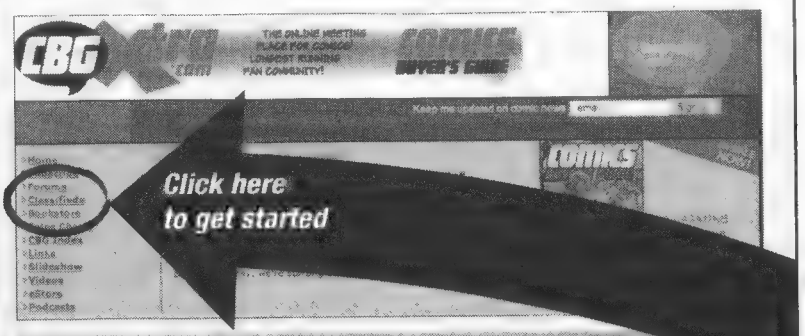

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DICK TRACY four color #21 1938 VG $150, Mickey and the Beanstalk paint book 1948 VG $100. Alfred Farrugio, 21 W Lyons St, Melville, NY 11747. cfw3042307

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UNCLE SAM #8, VG, $100; Igis The Invincible #4, VG/FN, $100; Whiz #51, fine, $75. Postal money order preferred. Cahill, 95 Terrill Ave., Trenton, NJ 08619. cfw3024387

4301 GOLDEN AGE, WANTED

LOOKING FOR coverless Sub-Mariner #12 (Timely); some pages missing ok, depending on which ones. Someone has to have one! Help me! Zookeeper615@hotmail.com Mike, 773-743-7622. cfw2571875

TARZAN IN NM #16, 17, 19, 23, 25, 26, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 39, 44, 46, 48, 53, 56, 58, 83, 87. Frank Ferrer, 3531 Westminster Rd., Sebring, FL 33875. cfw2785964

WANTED TARZAN in NM #16, #19, #23, #25, #26, #29, #31, #32, #33, #34, #39, #44, #46, #48, #53, #56, #58, #83, #87. Frank Ferrer, 3531 Westminster Rd, Sebring, FL 33875. cfw2912219

4310 SILVER AGE, FOR SALE

1940S-1970S Comics for sale. 50,000+ wide selection, strict grading, reasonable prices. Request 52 page old comics catalog, with $2 (outside U.S. $5). Mightymags.com, POB 22916, St. Petersburg, FL 33742 or view online www.mightymags.com cfw2924620

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AMAZING FANTASY 15 4.0 graded, CGC off white to white pages, $7,000. Call John 908-229-5518. cfw2822409

4320 GENERAL COMICS, FOR SALE

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HEEYYY COLLECTORS! Comics! DC, Marvel, Dell, Gold Key, Japanese Manga, TV tie-ins etc. Mark Simpson, 123 St. George's Avenue, Sault Sainte Marie, Ontario, Canada P6B 1X4. cfw2583027

HEY KIDS! Comics for sale! Silver Age to the present. The Funnies Farm, 1A Ward Street, Suffern, NY 10901. Email: msgr4289@aol.com cfw2954524

OLD AND new comics for sale, E-Mail me your want lists, Wings Comics, E-C Comics, Star Wars #1 $55. jeffscomics@yahoo.com cfw2963942

TINYZEUS COMICS and Entertainment is now offering free domestic shipping on orders of $50 and over! http://stores.shop.ebay.com/tinyzeus-comics-and-entertainment cfw2963962

4321 GENERAL COMICS, WANTED

COIN AND Currency Collections wanted by collector! Both foreign and United States. Highest check offer promptly sent. Mail insured. Bill Morgan, Box 361224, Birmingham, AL 35236. cfw3003925

DANIEL BOONE by Nick Candy nice copies of issues 2 4 5 6 7 needed please. Call Joseph 614-270-0473 not after 8pm. cfw3034473

4400 ORIGINAL ART, FOR SALE

GOLDEN AGE comic book cover replica's in color on 15x20 board by Tony SASE for details. Tony Santangelo, 1856 Peachtree Ave, The Villages, FL 32162. cfw3042293

GOLDEN AGE super hero poster illustrations on 15x20 board by Tony SASE for details. Tony Santangelo, 1856 Peachtree Ave, The Villages, FL 32162. cfw3042287

4401 ORIGINAL ART, WANTED

BUYING ORIGINAL Art from 1980's Megaton Series. E-mail me at jastermereelebay@aol.com cfw2980254

HEAVY METAL movie: Wanted - Cels, backgrounds, signed art, conceptual images. Corben, Achilleus, Ploog, others. Anything unusual! Extensive Search, PO Box 10145, Bradenton, FL 34282. 941-554-8191. cfw2964758

WANTED! MARIE Severin/EC hand colored prints, sold by Russ Cochran in the early 1970s. Grant Geissman, ec4gg@aol.com 818-501-0884. cfw3003793

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4420 BOOKS - GENERAL, FOR SALE

"FETISH 2009". Bill Paerson's 32 page B/D art catalog. "Screw" art by "Rich." Adults only. $8. Richard Bassford, 31 Ginger Place, Cold Spring, NY 10516. cfw3027880

1961 HOW To Encyclopedias. Elevin volumes. Build or repair almost anything $10. 1965 Man From UNCLE coloring book. Unused. $15. 618-398-2673. cfw2964615

1975 CUT: The Unseen Cinema. If you've ever wondered what has been cut fromt he films you've seen, this book is for you. $20. 618-398-2673. cfw2964610

BILL PEARSON'S fully illustrated whodunnit novel "Detour Drifter." Covers by Steranko. D. Adkins, N. Cuti, others. $15 + $4. Richard Bassford, 31 Ginger Place, Cold Spring, NY 10516. cfw3027871

DC COMICS Archives for sale. For a free list, send a self addressed stamped envelope to: Charles LeCates, 402 Arch St., Seaford, DE 19973. cfw3027978

FARROW AND Blackstorm a new fantasy novel by Gary Petras available now.at Barnes and Noble Amazon Trytium Publishing and all fine bookstores for $12.95. cfw2785926

OVERSTREET PRICE Guides #5 (1975) 9 cover photos clipped out #6 (1976) 4 cover photos clipped out #7-#29, #35-#38 all $15 each. Tony Santangelo, 1856 Peachtree

4430 PAPERBACKS, FOR SALE

AMAZING SPIDERMAN 1966, ASM 1978 back again, Fantastic Four 1966, FF return 1967, Hulk 1966, Thor 1966, Superman 1966 origin, Batman vs The Joker 1966, Batman vs The Penguin 1966, Green Lantern Green Arrow #1 1972, Li'l Abner 1953 $10 each. Alfred Farrugio, 21 W Lyons St, Melville, NY 11747. cfw3042331

TV/ MOVIE Tie-In paperbacks/ hardbacks. Many old favourites! Check it out, couch potatoes! Mark Simpson, 123 St. George's Ave, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, CANADA P6B 1X4. cfw2568900

4450 MAGAZINES, FOR SALE

10,000+ MONSTER, sci-fi, horror, satire, comic, more. Strict grading, reasonable prices. Request 24 page magazine catalog, with $2 (outside U.S. $5). Mightymags.com, POB 22916, St. Petersburg, FL 33742 or view online www.mightymags.com cfw2924608

4610 PORTFOLIOS/POSTERS FOR SALE

SPIDERMAN POSTERS. Three beautiful giant size 20x30" prints. Two the same. All for $15 plus $6. Richard Bassford, 31 Ginger Place, Cold Spring, NY 10516. cfw3027869

4660 MISCELLANEOUS, FOR SALE

1940 S-2006 COMICS, sports and non-sports cards, model kits, monster/ horror/ sci-fi mags. Send $1 for list(s) or phone. Tony Iannone, 59 Concord Dr, Fairview Heights, IL 62208. 618-398-2673. 3915466

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FOR SALE: Jersey Gods (Image 2009) #1 Convention Exclusive $5. Tim Lynch, 30 Scott Dr., S. Windsor, CT 06074. cfw2964676

FREE COMICS? Free games? Free software? Free meals? Visit and see what's available at our online freebie portal! Membership required. http://www.all4nada.com cfw2784780

4661 MISCELLANEOUS, WANTED

BUYING OLD Wrestling posters, programs, magazines, especially Georgia Ringsiders, All Star cards, MSG, Boston Gardens. Clark Brown, 308 Ridge Dr., Goodview, VA 24095. E-mail: figure4@msn.com cfw2967995

COIN AND Currency Collections wanted by collector! Both foreign and United States. Highest check offer promptly sent. Mail insured. Bill Morgan, Box 361224, Birmingham, AL 35236. cfw3003931

Doing research on coming attraction slides of silent serials that are still available. Can anyone send me a list of titles in your collection and if they feature a scene from the silent serial. Robert Youhouse, 2040 Ardmore Blvd., Pittsburgh, PA 15221. cfw2998396

I want to nice magazines of Megafan video game magazines issue No.2 Laura Croft cover send prices. Wade Slaughter, 16 Manor Dr., Dover, DE 19901. cfw2964748

MOVIE POSTERS wanted. Serious collector paying top dollar for movie posters, lobby cards, window cards, movie photos and concert posters. Buying all sizes, any condition. Will buy entire collections. Finders fees paid. Don t do anything with your posters until you at least call me! Ralph DeLuca, 157 Park Ave., Madison, NJ 07940. 800-392-4050. ralph@ralphdeluca.com. 3938914

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PULPS, DIGEST, magazines, hardcovers, paperbacks, Fanzines, SF/F, Horry, Mystery, TV, Movie, etc. Nancy Drew, Hardy Boys, Dana Girls. JS, 1500 Main Avenue, Kaukauna, WI 54130. cfw3044276

WANTED CLASSICS Illustrated The War of the Worlds (Gilberton 1955) #124. Tim Lynch, 30 Scott Dr., S. Windsor, CT 06074. cfw2964670

4700 NOVELTIES, TOYS, GAMES FOR SALE

SNOOPY COLLECTOR glasses. 1968, 1965, 1971. Also Tweety Bird, Roadrunner, Porky Pig, Kermit. $5 ea + $4. Richard Bassford, 31 Ginger Place, Cold Spring, NY 10516. cfw3027874

4701 NOVELTIES, TOYS, GAMES WANTED

WANTED MINT or NM game to include comic book Milton Bradley 1967 Marvel Captain America board game. Call Joseph 614-270-0473 not after 8pm. cfw3034466

4801 FANZINES, WANTED

WANTED! 1950S and erlay 1960s EC and Kurtzman fanzines, like Hoohah! Scoop, Potrzebie, Spoof, Smudge, etc. Grant Geissman, ec4gg@aol.com 818-501-0884. cfw3003818

4902 VIDEOS/DVDS FOR SALE

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FROM THE EDITORS OF COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE

CBG Xpress — COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE

News from comics' longest-running magazine!

Grendel art book headlines Dark Horse

The Art of Matt Wagner's Grendel, a 200-page hardcover showcasing work from the many Grendel series, will be released by Dark Horse Comics on Aug. 15. Among the images will be never-before-seen art, plus art by Frank Miller, Paul Pope, Tony Harris, and many others.

Click here for more of Dark Horse's upcoming releases.

New Comics This Week: What's expected in your store?

Each week, CBGXtra.com posts the current week's list of comics that have shipped to stores for that Wednesday's New Comics Day as well as a peek ahead at next week's titles.

Click here for a list of comics that are in stores as of March 14.

Click here for a peek at the March 21 shipping schedule.

Writer Arnold Drake dies at 83

Comic-book writer Arnold Drake has died at the age of 83. According to reports, he recently attended the New York Comic-Con in late February, where he fell ill

APE 07

Bryan Lee O'Malley

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I got 39 different FREE comics!

What did *you* get on FCBD?

by **MAGGIE THOMPSON**

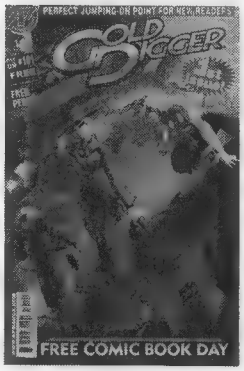
AdHouse Books: *FCHS* (FCBD 2009 edition) © respective owners. Writer: Vito Delsante. Artist: Rachel Freire. Writer-Artist: Lamar Abrams. Black and white, featuring two stories, one focused on Forest City High School, the other on Max Guy, "a robot boy who can't seem to stay out of trouble."

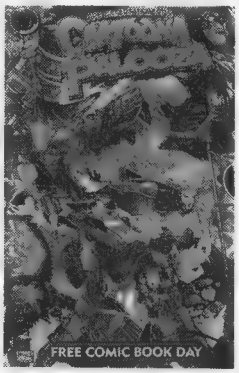
Alterna: *Attack of the Alterna Zombies!* Volume 1 © 2009 respective creators. Writer: Stephen Lindsay. Artist Jeff McComsey. Other creators: various. The first story in the squareback smaller-dimension collection teams Jesus and Abe Lincoln fighting zombies, and the remainder of the contents comprise nine previews of Alterna comics.

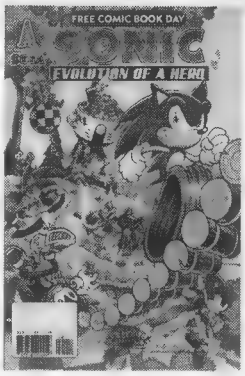
Antarctic: *Gold Digger #101 Special* May 2009 © 2009 Fred Perry Writer-Artist: Fred Perry. The intro says, "Never read *Gold Digger* before ...? ... This issue marks a new direction for the series, making it the perfect jumping-on point." It's the first chapter of a new adventure but takes the time to set the stage, introduce all the characters, and provide an intriguing situation that makes the reader want to find out what happens next while providing a beginning, middle, and enough of an end for the adventure to satisfy.

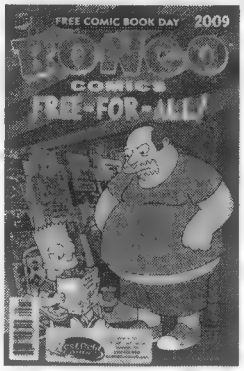
Ape Entertainment: *Ape Entertainment's Cartoonapalooza #2* © 2009 its respective creators. Writers: various. Artists: various. Hey, six stories: six beginnings, six middles, six ends. It's only a sampler, but the entries are designed to provide satisfying snippets.

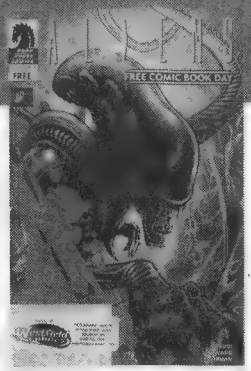
Arcana: *Arcana Presents* No discernable copyright or similar indicia. Artists: various. Writers: various. Stories in the sampler are "Kade," "Creepsville," and "Eve," each a set-up for the next chapter.

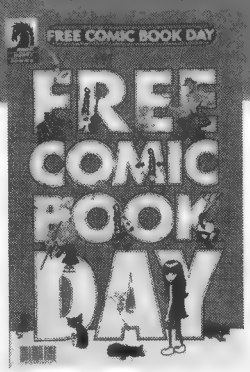


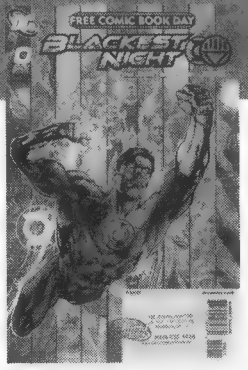


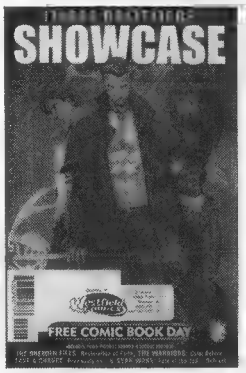












Archie: ***Mighty Archie Art Players, Free Comic Book Day Edition* #1** June 2009 © Archie Comic Publications, Inc. Writer: George Gladir. Art: Stan Goldberg. Four complete short stories feature the Archie cast in a Western, a modern fairytale, a mermaid's story, and an adventure in ancient Egypt.

Archie: ***Sonic the Hedgehog Free Comic Book Day Edition* #1** May 2009 © 1991-2009 Sega Corporation. Writer: Ian Flynn. Artists: various. This introduction to the world of Sonic includes a brief history of the comic-book series as well as background on the world and its characters and a comic-book cover gallery.

Aspen: ***Worlds of Aspen* #4** © 2009 Aspen MLT, Inc. Creators: various. "A special four-in-one sampling of Aspen's exciting universes and much more!" First looks at *Executive Assistant: Iris*; *Soulfire: New World Order*; *Soulfire*; and *Fathom: Volume 3*.

Blue Water Comics: ***William Shatner Presents*** © William Shatner. Writers: William Shatner, Scott Davis, David McIntee, C.J. Henderson. Artists: Erich Owen, Joey Mason, Patrick Broderick. Tek War is back, and there are two other storylines in this preview; of the three samples, the final one actually is a complete (albeit brief) story.

Bongo: ***Bongo Comics*** © 2007, 2008, 2009 Bongo Entertainment, Inc. Writer: Chuck Dixon. Artists: John Delaney and Dan Davis. Other writers and artists: various. "No Such Thing as a Free Comic" finds Bart and Milhouse possessing a free comic book that Comic Book Guy wants. And there's more in the form of story reprints.

Boom! Kids: ***Cars: The Rookie* #1** (of 4) March 2009 © 2009 Disney/Pixar. Writer: Alan J. Porter. Artist: Albert Carreres. Lightning McQueen tells the story of his early racing days in this excerpt from #1. (There's an *Incredibles* back-up, to boot.)

Boom! Studios: ***Warhammer FCBD*** May 2009 © 2009 Games Workshop Ltd. Writer: Graham McNeill. Artists: Rahsan Ekedal and Luis Melo. It's the first chapter of *Warhammer Online: Prelude to War*.

Dabel Brothers Publishing: ***Dabel Brothers Spotlight, Free Comic Book Day***, May 2009 © 2009 Lucas Books, Del Rey, Paramount, Jim Butcher, and C.E. Murphy. Creators: various. It's four snippets of *The Dresden Files*, *The Warriors*, *Take a Chance*, and *Star Wars: Fate of the Jedi*.

Dark Horse: ***Free Comic Book Day and Star Wars: The Clone Wars — Gauntlet of Death*** May 2009 *Star Wars* © 2009 Lucasfilm Ltd. Other © their respective holders. Writer: Henry Gilroy. Artist: Ramón Pérez; other creators: various. In addition to the *Star Wars* short, there are such other characters as Usagi Yojimbo, Emily the Strange, and Indiana Jones, not to mention Beanworld.

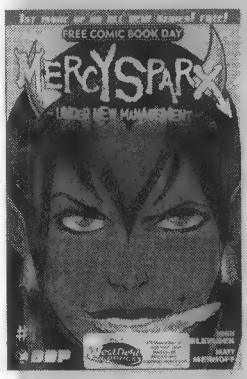
Dark Horse: ***Free Comic Book Day: Aliens/ Predator*** May 2009 © 2009 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. Writer: John Arcudi. Artists: Zach Howard, Mark Irwin, Javier Saltares. There are Aliens. And Predators. And they are icky. And just might eat us.

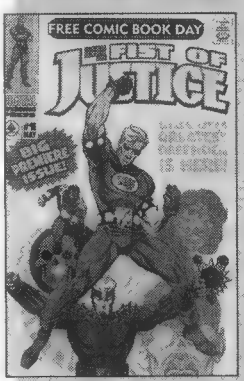
DC: ***Blackest Night* #0** June 2009 © 2009 DC Comics. Writer: Geoff Johns. Artists: Ivan Reis, Oclair Albert, Rob Hunter. In one of the focal points of FCBD, DC kicks off a new direction for its universe, complete with Flash's comment to Green Lantern on that world's super-hero life. And death. "*Death* isn't necessarily the *end*. Not in *this* line of work. You. Me. Clark. Ollie." There are a number of illustrated charts of the assorted groups involved in the new line-up. You say your body is rotting in the grave? Hey, time to wake up, sleepyheads!

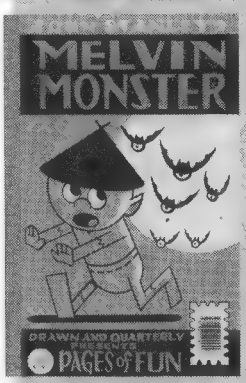
DC: ***DC Kids Mega Sampler* #1** June 2009 © DC Comics. Johnny DC makes the case for *Tiny Titans*, *Batman: The Brave and the Bold*, and *Super Friends*. The stories are brief, aimed at younger readers, and self-contained.

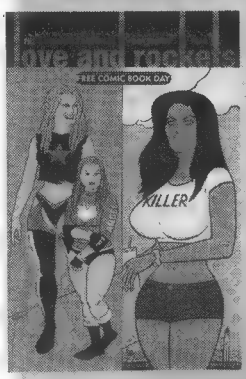
Devils Due: ***Mercy Sparx, Volume 2: Under New Management* #1** May 2009 © 2009 Josh Blaylock. Writer: Josh Blaylock. Artist: Matt Merhoff. The fantasy series features the first-person narrative of a demonic angel-hunter.

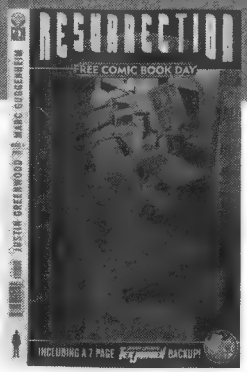
Digital Webbing: ***Fist of Justice (Free Comic Book Edition)* #1** May 2009 © 2009 Digital Webbing, LLC. © 2009 Mike Imboden and Ed Dukeshire. Writer: Mike Imboden. Artist: Andre Coelho. "The Fury of Justice" tells the origin of Marc Mason as The Fist of Justice.

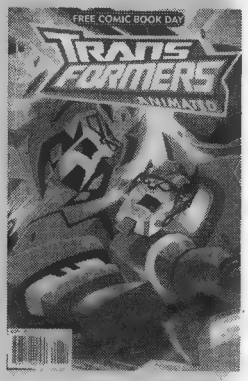












Drawn & Quarterly: ***The John Stanley Library featuring Nancy & Melvin Monster: The Drawn & Quarterly Free Comic Book Day 2009*** © 2008 James and Lynda Stanley; © 2008 United Features Syndicate. Writer-Artist: John Stanley. This is prime Done in One material from one of the geniuses of the Golden Age. The samples include the first appearance of Oona Goosepimple in *Nancy*.

Fantagraphics: ***Love and Rockets: New Stories Free Comic Book Day*** **Edition #1** April 2009 © 2009 Gilbert and Jaime Hernandez, © 2009 Fantagraphics Books. "We didn't call it *New* Tales just to mess with you!" There are four stories, two by Jaime, two by Gilbert.

First Salvo: ***Contract Free Comic Book Day*** **#1** May 2009 © 2008 Garan Madeiros. Writer: Garan Madeiros. Artists: Kevin Sharpe, Thony Sillas, Ariel Padilla. "Western" science fiction features a busty focal character.

CANCELLED Gemstone: ***The EC Comics Sampler***

CANCELLED Gemstone: ***The Life & Times of Scrooge McDuck/Mickey & the Gang***

IDW: ***Free Comic Book Day 2009*** May 2009 © 2008, 2009 Hasbro. Creators: various. Stories feature a *Transformers* adventure and two *G.I. Joe* tales.

Image: ***Cyberforce/Hunter-Killer, First Look*** May 2009 © 2009 TopCow Productions, Inc. Writer: Mark Waid. Artist: Kenneth Rocafort. The story sets up the story to come — and provides profiles of the members of Cyberforce and Hunter-Killer.

Image: ***Savage Dragon*** **#148** May 2009 © 2009 Erik Larsen. Writer-Artist Erik Larsen. Not only is this a full-size comic book, not only does it introduce the Golden Age Daredevil to the Savage Dragon universe, it also brings The Little Wise Guys to that universe. It's an outreach that combines current story with comic-book history.

Impact: ***Impact University*** **Volume 5** © 2009. Creators: various. Contents are a variety of samples from comics "how to" volumes.

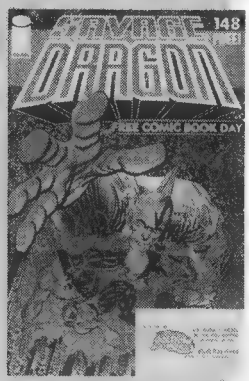
Maerkle Press: ***Love and Capes*** **#10** © 2009 Thomas F. Zahler. Writer-Artist Thomas F. Zahler. It's a full issue of the story — and there's a turning point in sight, with a wedding scheduled for December (and a wedding gimmick cover in the planning stages now).

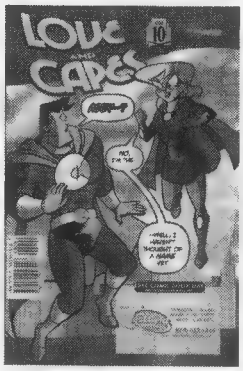
Marvel: ***Free Comic Book Day 2009 (Wolverine: Origin of an X-Men)*** **#1** May 2009 © 2009 Marvel Characters, Inc. Writer: Fred Van Lente. Artist: Gurihiru. The title says it; it's a tidy Done in One — with a lead-in to the character's introduction to the Marvel universe.

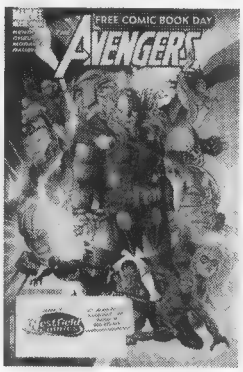
Marvel: ***Free Comic Book Day 2009 Avengers*** **#1** May 2009 © 2009 Marvel Characters, Inc. Writer: Brian Michael Bendis. Artists: Jim Cheung, Mark Morales. "The Way Things Are" finds Spider-Man dodging Thor as the Asgardian is thrown to the street. A battle bringing together lots of Marvel characters ensues — and the last line caps it. (Have we ever seen this aspect of super-heroing before?)

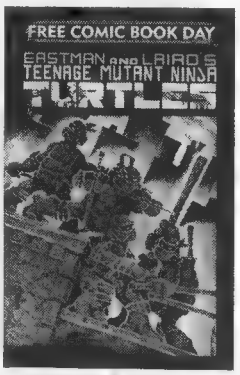
Mirage: ***TMNT #1 25th Anniversary Reprint*** May 2009 © 2009 Mirage Studios. Artists-Writers: Kevin Eastman and Peter Laird. This is a sturdy black-and-white re-release of a classic, Done in One and all. They thought it would be the only issue when they created it. Who knew?

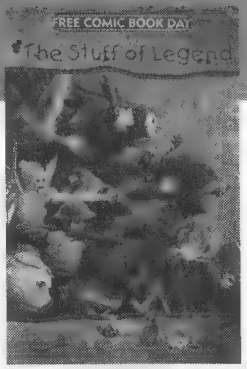
Oni: ***Resurrection*** **#0** May 2009 © 2009 Marc Guggenheim. © 2009 Comedy Partners. Writers: Marc Guggenheim, Jim Massey. Artists: Justin Greenwood, Robbi Rodriguez.

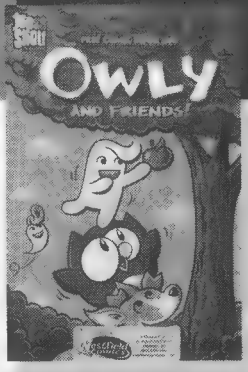












There's a bonus in the form of Stephen Colbert's Tek Jensen in "Horn Like Me." Both stories are science fiction, both are complete in themselves — and obviously both are part of a larger story.

Radical: ***Radical*** May 2009 © 2009 Radical Publishing, Inc., and a number of others. Writers: various. Artists: various. It's basically a bunch of ads for upcoming projects. Storytelling is minimal to nonexistent.

Red 5 Comics: ***Atomic Robo/Drone/We Kill Monsters*** © 2009 Brian Clevinger and Scott Wegener; © 2009 Red 5 Comics. Creators: various. In this anthology, stories are fantasy and/or science fiction.

Starbridge Media Group: ***NASCAR Heroes: Origins* #1** © 2009 Starbridge Media Group, Inc. Writer: Jeremy Diamond. Artists: Peter Habjan, Rich Duhaney. It's hard to tell the title from the cover, but this is what the solicitation said. At any rate, the story involves the team of a super-powered NASCAR driver and his crew.

Studio 407: ***Free Comic Book Day Sampler* #1** Writers: various. Artists: various. The issue starts an assortment of stories.

Th3rd World Studios: ***The Stuff of Legend*** © 2009 Mike Raicht, Brian Smith, and Th3rd World Studios. Writers: Mike Raicht, Brian Smith. Artist: Charles Paul Wilson III. When a boy is sucked into his closet by The Boogeyman, it's up to the toys to rescue him. This is not a stand-alone tale: another "you'd better buy our release to find out what happens."

Top Shelf: ***Owly and Friends!*** © 2009 Andy Runton and other © by various. Writer-Artist: Andy Runton; other creators: various. The black-and-white collection features some wordless tales and other simple ones.

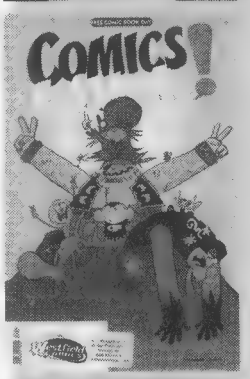
Toronto Comic Arts Festival: ***Comics Festival!*** May 2009 © 2009 Toronto Comic Arts Festival. Creators: various. It's an anthology of short strips and longer stories.

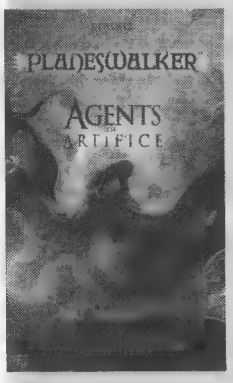
Viz: ***Shonen Jump Free Comic Book Day Special 2009*** © by various. Creators: Various. The color and black-and-white manga magazine reads from the "back," Japanese style. There's a stack of copyrights on the indicia page, but the primary attraction is "Ultimo Chapter 0" by Stan Lee and Hiroyuki Takei.

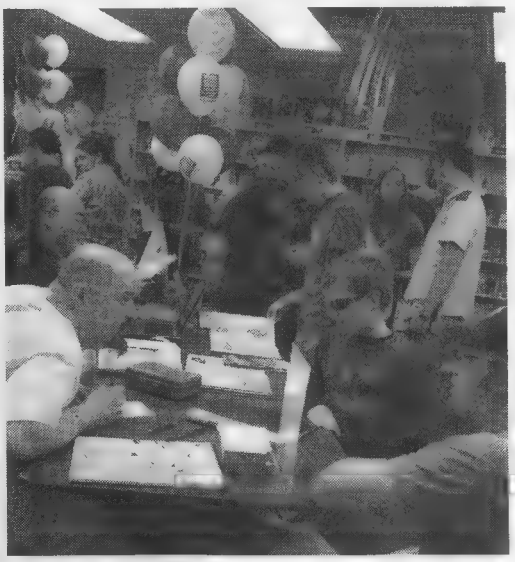
APPARENTLY CANCELLED Wildcard Ink: ***Gumby Two-in-One*** At least, Westfield never got copies.

Wizard: ***The Wizard Hot List*** It seems as if I manage to miss one release each FCBD; by the time I could regroup to try again, all the copies were gone. It looks as if the Hot List was, itself, Hot.

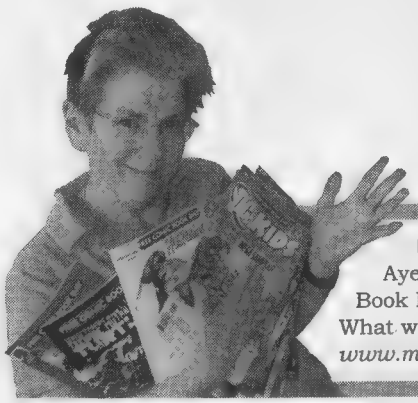
Wizards of the Coast: ***Magic the Gathering: Agents of Artifice Sampler*** © 2009 Wizards. Not marked as a Free Comic Day item or a comic book, it's a "Sample Chapter Not for Resale" of Ari Marmell's Planeswalker novel *Agents of Artifice*, which was released in hardcover in February.







More FCBD reviews appear on Pages 38 and 39!



MAGGIE THOMPSON thanks Bob Moreau of Westfield Comics and Bruce Ayers of Capital City Comics — both in Madison, Wis., for making Free Comic Book Day so much fun for her. (You'll note the Westfield logo on many issues here.) What were your favorites among the free comics in 2009 and why? Let us know! I'm at *www.maggiethompson.com* and at *www.CBGXtra.com!*

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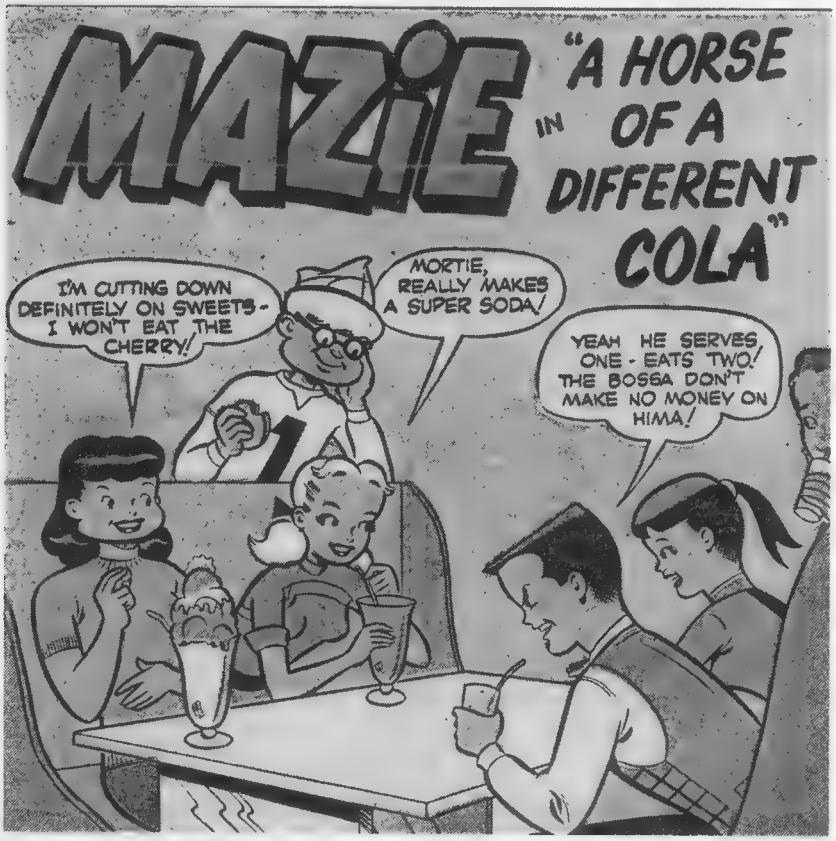
UNLOCKING LOCKJAW AND MAZIE

Paul Dale Roberts
5606 Moonlight Way
Elk Grove, CA 95758

I am glad to hear that Lockjaw is truly a dog (*Captain Comics*, ***CBG*** #1653). I could never buy the idea that Lockjaw was an Inhuman that had been disfigured to look like a dog and then experienced his fellow Inhumans treating him "inhumanely." John Byrne was off-base with the idea of having Lockjaw as a victim of Terrigenesis. I will always think of Lockjaw as a real dog.

On another note, I remember when I was a little boy reading *Herbie* comic books and my mother showed me a comic book that she owned: an issue of *Mazie*. When she showed it to me, I wasn't interested, since it was too much of a girlie comic book for me. Now, I wish I had taken it from her and held onto it. By reading Michelle Nolan's articles in ***CBG*** #1653 and #1654, I now understand the storyline of *Mazie* and why my mother was a fan of this comic book. Thank you!



MORE WATCHMEN WATCHING

Luigi Novi

The film was already at a bit of a disadvantage in that I didn't really care for the source material. I went anyway, not only because I had been looking forward to it for a year or two, but because I had enjoyed Alan Moore's other work, as well as Zack Snyder's previous film, *300*, so I figured that perhaps Snyder could present the material in a way that I'd like. In watching it, however, I was struck again with the observation that how well a film is adapted from another medium (especially comics) depends not only on how well the filmmaker stays true to the source material, but how well he does *not*.

Until 2000, only the former was a problem, since most adaptations of comic-book properties were marred by serious deviations from the source material that were not merely cosmetic, but also violated the essence of those properties. With *X-Men*, *Spider-Man*, and Christopher Nolan's *Batman* films, this problem seemed to be corrected. But with 2005's *Sin City*, it seemed that some filmmakers were overshooting the mark and ending up on the opposite end of the Adaptation Fidelity Spectrum: adapting the material *too* closely. To me, changes from the source material are not inherently bad, any more than they're inherently good, but are predicated on whether they help to make a good film and serve to capture the *essence* of the material, rather than a literal reiteration of it.

What I notice about the not-faithful-enough and the too-faithful end of the spectrum is the way they both manifest to the same effect: In both cases, the result is corny, campy, obsessed with being referential, and cloistered from naturalistic storytelling. The former comes because the adapters perceive the source medium to be corny and assume that the film adaptation must, therefore, also be (Ed Begley Jr. discovering Jim Carrey up to no good in *Batman Forever*). The latter occurs because, well, much of what's in comics works on the page but *is* corny and campy on film (Josh Hartnett musing on the sound effect of a gunshot in *Sin City*, even though this is only done in the

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comics *because* comics don't have sound).

The problem I saw with the graphic novel is that Moore seemed more interested in theme than in plot. Usually, bad writing is characterized by the opposite problem. But *Watchmen* was *so* labyrinthine in its inclusion of copious subtext, backstory, and even what appeared to be filler not pertinent to the "main" story, that that central narrative seemed hopelessly lost, resembling a story saddled with perpetual exposition. When stripped of all the bells and whistles, the mystery of who killed The Comedian and why didn't seem interesting, but a trite, color-by-numbers, super-villain yarn. Moore structured all the add-ons so that readers could enjoy different interconnected parts of the narrative at their own leisure during a long sitting (which is why he was opposed to most attempts at adapting it for film), but I didn't see the point of the central story, if all those detours didn't support it. (It's interesting to note that Roger Ebert also perceived the story to be less focused on plot.)

In the same way that J.R.R. Tolkien wrote *Lord of the Rings* to showcase his languages at the expense of story, Moore sacrificed story for theme. This wasn't a problem for the *LotR* films, because Peter Jackson is at heart a storyteller and wasn't so blindly attached to the letter of the novels that he was unwilling to structure the material to make an entertaining story from its spirit.

Zack Snyder, however, didn't seem to go that route with *Watchmen*. While he and fellow screenwriters Kurt Johnstad and Michael Gordon added material to *300*, thereby showing that they could add their own artistic vision to interpreting someone else's story, Snyder, David Hayter, and Alex Tse showed no such sentiment with *Watchmen*. Perhaps their additions to *300* were made more to pad out Frank Miller's threadbare story and create a sense of multi-setting rhythm, which *Watchmen*'s more dense narrative didn't allow. In any case, I thought the movie was so slavish in its recreation of the book that it seemed to be suffocating.

Don't get me wrong; it was off to a good start. The fight choreography during The Comedian's murder was beautiful, and setting it to Nat King Cole's "Unforgettable" was a hauntingly good choice. The subsequent opening titles set to Bob Dylan's "The Times They Are a-Changin' " created a wistful sense of nostalgia. These were nice touches and were a glimpse of what a good storyteller can do when adapting another's work.

But the film, for the most part, trod no new ground. The visuals were obvious, the music lacked subtlety, and the dialogue was stilted. I wasn't sure if this was the dialogue itself or bad acting (Malin Ackerman's scenes stood out to me as particularly bad), but, either way, it didn't feel natural. When Nite Owl asks, "What's happened to America? What's happened to the American Dream?" in the comic, it may not be that natural, but it can work more easily because the reader can imagine it being delivered rhetorically, in a whisper, *etc.* (A lot of comic-book monologues can work, if the reader imagines them as internal thoughts, even if the creators insist on presenting them as oral.) In the film, scenes like this and others, such as the Crimebusters meeting, Laurie's heart-to-heart at the end with her mother, *etc.*, didn't work for me.

Instead of choosing that corny music during Dan and Laurie's love

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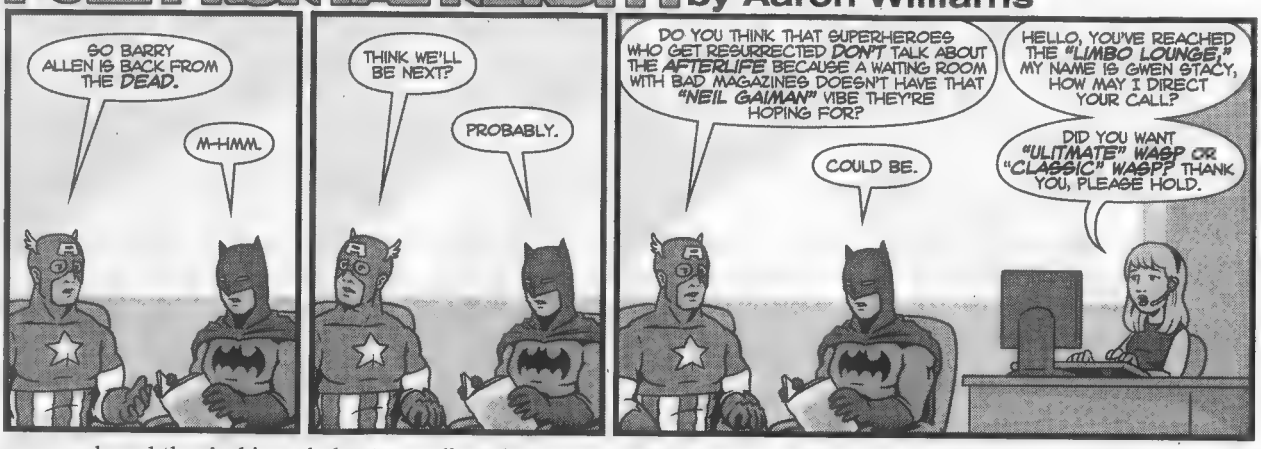
FULL FRONTAL NERDITY by Aaron Williams



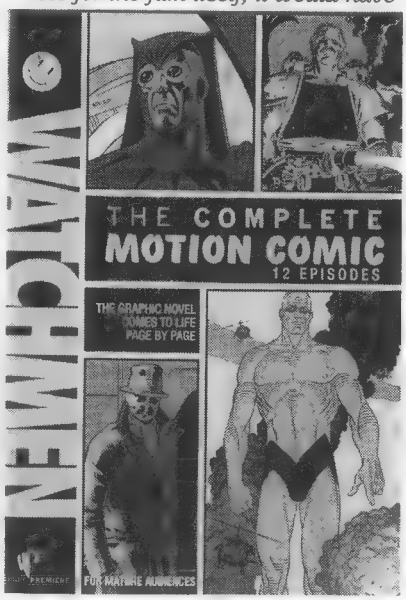
scene onboard the *Archie* and shooting it with actual pelvic thrusts, the scene might have been better served with more subtlety. Instead of robotic duplication of the comic's 1985 setting, complete with a shot framing the World Trade Center that was about as subtle as a lead pipe, imagine what it might have been, if Snyder and company had actually decided to be bold, maybe deviate a bit, and see if they could have recreated the story in a post-Sept. 11 setting, perhaps with Ozymandias engineering the nuke to appear to be the work of Iran or North Korea. Perhaps the story could focus on the nostalgia *for* the Cold War and its more simple Good USA vs. Evil Soviet Union conflict.

When you consider screenwriter David Hayter's online comments that the "new global climate has finally caught up with the vision that Alan Moore had in 1986. It is the perfect time to make this movie," you wonder what might have been, had he tried to bring the story out of its four-color shell. Instead, the only major divergence is in the removal of the giant telepathic squid, which, while a relief, was too little, too late.

Was the film *bad*? No. At the same time, it wasn't that great. At best, I can say that it was interesting to see it and to see how Snyder brought it to live-action form. I say Snyder, not "Snyder and Hayter," because, well, realistically, what did Hayter bring to the project that wasn't in the book, aside from typing it in the right format? I made a point of reading *V for Vendetta* and *300* before seeing the film adaptations, which I think served me well. (It caused me to see how a frenetic, too-quickly paced action mess the former was and allowed me to appreciate how the latter improved on the source material.) When I was done seeing *Watchmen*, I wondered how differently I might've reacted to it, had I *not* read the book. I don't think I would have thought any better of the performances, dialogue, and camera work, but I'm curious as to how I might have articulated it without being able to compare it to the source.

Brent: *I reviewed the* ***Watchmen Motion Comic*** *DVD in* ***CBG*** *#1655 and found that, even after having reread the graphic novel and seeing the movie, I discovered additional elements through the motion comic's designers' subtle (and not-so-subtle, in some cases) layout and pacing. I knew the iconic smiley face with the obligatory smear had popped up at various points in the comics but I hadn't spotted as many there as I did in the* ***Motion Comic****.*

As for the film itself, it would have been an interesting challenge to see whether it could have worked as well in a post-Sept. 11 setting, but, then, purists would have had a field day ripping that approach to shreds. Making Nixon less of a caricature might have helped, as well. I think the passage of nearly a quarter-century since ***Watchmen****'s publication has softened many readers' feelings toward the former president. In 1986, the memories of Nixon's activities and disgrace were all too fresh in many readers' minds.*



The change in the political landscape definitely affected ***V for Vendetta****. Even DC's first publication of the story from* ***Warrior*** *came after a political shift in the United Kingdom had already made many of* ***V****'s points less prophetic. By the time of the movie, V could be viewed by many as a terrorist rather than an anarchist.*

As for the sex scene in ***Watchmen****, I felt as if I were watching late 1980s or early 1990s Showtime late at night and was mildly embarrassed to be in a public theater during that sequence.*

TURNING OFF TEEN TITANS

Jeff Dyer

Hey, DC!

If you're trying to alienate *Teen Titans* fans, you succeeded. Here are four easy steps for how to get a long-time Titans fan to drop the series:

1. Eliminate all of the book's best characters. (Superboy, Robin, Kid Flash, *etc.*)
2. Put a bunch of second-string characters on the team. (Kid Devil, Miss Martian, *etc.*)
3. Increase the price of the book from $3 to $4 (which includes a co-feature starring Ravager, whom I don't care about, anyway).
4. Make sure the latest issue (#70) is

part of a crossover between two other titles (*Titans* and *Vigilante*) that I do not collect or read.

If you can do all four of those steps, you are certain to lose this reader. *Teen Titans* has fallen quite a ways from the glory days of Geoff Johns and Mike McKone. What a shame. Why can't good things last? Looks like *Justice League of America* is following suit!

I just read the solicitation for an upcoming issue of *Teen Titans*. A member of the Titans dies. Oh, wow. Amazing. What great storytelling. I'm so excited. What a new and exciting idea: killing a character!

Sorry. Do I sound jaded?

Maybe it's because DC killed Bart Allen, then brought him back.

Maybe it's because DC killed Conner Kent, then brought him back.

Maybe it's because Hal Jordan and Barry Allen have died and returned.

Maybe it's because all kinds of characters are coming back to life in "Blackest Night."

Maybe it's because Bruce Wayne supposedly "died" in *Final Crisis* (Is that *really* the big plot point of that much-hyped, disappointing series?) but is obviously coming back.

Mind you, I'm *glad* Hal, Barry, and Bart are back. I don't think they should have been killed in the first place. It's tiresome and repetitious, especially over the past few years. Conner Kent's return puzzles me. What was the point of *Infinite Crisis*? I thought Superboy's death was that book's big moment. And that was just a couple of years ago. His triumphant return didn't feel all that triumphant, considering that his corpse was still warm. And DC introduced Chris Kent, apparently setting him up as the new Superboy. Weird. Is death the only imaginative idea DC has any more?

Hey, DC, listen closely. When you kill a character and bring him or her back a year or two later — it really defeats the whole purpose, doesn't it?

Yeah, yeah, I know. Comics aren't real (they're not, right?) and killing characters is one of the few bargaining chips that the writers can use. But it just seems as if it's been done to death lately. Pun intended.

I'd like to challenge DC to think up new and interesting stories that *don't* revolve around death. There's gotta be a few, right?

Flashbacks

115 yrs Jul 14, 1894 Pioneering animation artist, director, producer **Dave Fleischer** is born.

105 yrs Jul 22, 1904 British artist **Roland Davies** is born. His work for such publications as *The Beano* includes comics adventures of Sexton Blake.

100 yrs Jul 9, 1909 Cartoonist and illustrator **Basil Wolverton** is born. Among his distinctive work are "Powerhouse Pepper" and the contest-winning "Lena the Hyena."

95 yrs Jul 10, 1914 Artist **Joe Shuster** is born. He's best known for co-creating Superman with Jerry Siegel.

70 yrs Jul 1939 DC's *Adventure Comics* #40 contains the first adventure of the Golden Age **Sandman** created by Gardner Fox and Bert Christman.

60 yrs Jul 1, 1949 Writer **Mike Baron** is born. He co-creates ***Nexus*** with Steve Rude and writes for such other characters as his own Badger, Marvel's Punisher, and DC's Flash.

60 yrs Jul 3, 1949 British comics writer and editor **Pat Mills** is born. He's behind ***2000 AD*** and writes such stories as ***Charley's War*** and develops such characters as **Judge Dredd**.

55 yrs Jul 17, 1954 Award-winning writer-producer **J. Michael Straczynski** is born. Creator and writer of *Babylon 5*, he works in many media, including projects for Marvel and DC.

55 yrs Jul 29, 1954 Colorist, writer, and Digital Chameleon co-founder **Lovern Kindzierski** is born.

50 yrs Jul 8, 1959 Penciller and inker **Stan Woch** is born.

50 yrs Jul 31, 1959 Artist-writer **Kaz** is born. He self-syndicates his *Underworld* strip and freelances a wide variety of material.

45 yrs Jul 1964 Gold Key's ***Mighty Samson* #1** marks the first appearance of the post-apocalyptic character by Otto Binder and Frank Thorne.

45 yrs Jul 1964 **The Green Goblin** first appears in Marvel's *Amazing Spider-Man* #14 in a story by Stan Lee and Steve Ditko.

45 yrs Jul 1964 **The Sub-Mariner** meets **The X-Men** for the first time in *X-Men* #6 in "Sub-Mariner! Joins The Evil Mutants" by Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, and Chic Stone.

45 yrs Jul 1964 Rip Off Press co-founder **Jack Jackson**, creating as **"Jaxon,"** produces what many consider to be the first underground comic book: ***God Nose***.

40 yrs Jul 20, 1969 ***Poison Elves*** writer-artist **Drew Hayes** is born.

40 yrs Jul 1969 Though it's been nine months since his birth, **Sue and Reed Richards'** infant son remains nameless. (Be patient, little one. Daddy has a giant intellect but it hasn't yet occurred to him that "Baby Richards" will be an inconvenient name when you're a teenager.)

40 yrs Jul 1969 Kinney National Service Inc. (which owns a variety of properties including **National Periodical Publications** and ***Mad***) acquires Warner Bros.-Seven Arts Limited.

40 yrs Jul 1969 In "Mission: Murder!" by Roy Thomas, Neal Adams, and Tom Palmer in Marvel's *X-Men* #58, Alex Summers adopts the identity of **Havok** and dons a new costume.

35 yrs Jul 1974 **Steve Geppi** opens his first Geppi's Comic World store.

30 yrs Jul 1979 **Black Cat** first appears in "Never Let The Black Cat Cross Your Path!" by Marv Wolfman, Keith Pollard, and Frank Giacoia in Marvel's *Amazing Spider-Man* #194.

25 yrs Jul 1984 **The Martian Manhunter** is reintroduced in "War — of the World?" by Gerry Conway, George Tuska, and Alex Nino in DC's *Justice League of America* #228.

25 yrs Jul 1984 **Dick Grayson** first appears as **Nightwing** in "There Shall Come a Titan" by Marv Wolfman, George Pérez, Mike DeCarlo, and Dick Giordano in DC's *Tales of the Teen Titans* #44.

20 yrs Jul 3, 1989 **Jim Backus**, best known to cartoon buffs as the voice of **Mr. Magoo**, dies at age 76.

20 yrs Jul 10, 1989 **Marge Duffy Devine** dies at age 74. She was the scribe of the **National Cartoonists Society** since its inception in 1946.

20 yrs Jul 10, 1989 **Mel Blanc** dies at age 81. In *That's **Not** All Folks!* he wrote about being the king of voice artists, known for performing Bugs Bunny and Porky Pig for Warner Bros.

20 yrs Jul 10, 1989 Belgian comics writer and *Pilote* co-editor **Jean-Michel Charlier** dies at age 64.

20 yrs Jul 1989 **Brian Hibbs** opens his **Comix Experience** store in San Francisco.

20 yrs Jul 1989 Joe Rainone and Phil Weiss buy Stanley Pachon's **"Bethlehem Collection."**

20 yrs Jul 1989 Just weeks before going to press, Archie Comic Publications Inc. announces it has canceled plans for its **Spectrum** super-hero comics line.

20 yrs Jul 1989 Time is cleared to merge with Warner, putting DC in the biggest media firm.

15 yrs Jul 1994 The first full appearance of **Impulse** is in "Speed Kills" by Mark Waid, Mike Wieringo, and Jose Marzan Jr. in DC's *Flash* (2nd series) #92.

10 yrs Jul 14, 1999 **Sal Trapani** dies at 72. The artist began working in comics in the S.M. Iger studio and was also active as a collector of old-time radio.

10 yrs Jul 1999 Metropolis Collectibles and Vincent's Collectibles merge as **Metropolis Collectibles**, run by Stephen Fishler and Vincent Zurzolo Jr.

10 yrs Jul 1999 **Quebecor Printing** announces it will acquire World Color Press to become the world's largest commercial printer.

MOONDOG'S AT 30

Gary Colabuono
Founder, Moondog's

Last fall, about 25 of us celebrated the 30th anniversary of the opening of the first Moondog's shop in September 1978.

From left: Vince Smith, Gary Colabuono, Patty Colabuono, and Chris Ecker

I just came across this photo and had to share it with you.

Before there was a Moondog's, Chris Ecker and I were doing comic-book deals together and goofing around at Chicagoland shows. He was just a high-school kid (I wasn't much older — 24), but one of the most responsible, trustworthy, intelligent, and creative guys I ever met. When it was time to open a second (and third and fourth and fifth) store and expand the Moondog's brand — Chris was the guy who made it happen.

Before there was a Moondog's, Vince Smith would come over to the house to help bag comics and look for books for his collection. When I needed someone to run all of the day-to-day operations of Moondog's — especially the sourcing and buying of all the products for a six-store (and ultimately 21-store) chain — Vince was the guy who made it happen.

We were the first stores in the country to have Batman and Simpsons boutiques and made tens of thousands of dollars of profit because Vince was in touch with the pop-culture scene. No one was more dependable than Vince. No one was more knowledgeable than Vince.

Many of you seeing this letter either knew Chris and Vince from their many years at Moondog's or worked with them as fellow employees or as vendors and industry contacts. The reunion gave us a chance to catch up on things again, and I wanted to share this with you.

Patty and I will be celebrating 36 years in June. A photo like this is one of life's little pleasures.

MOVIES AND BOOKS

C.S. Wright

I guess we finally know who watches *Watchmen*. We do. You and I and millions of others. (If ticket sales are any indication.) Given the "R" rating and Web chatter beforehand, I knew what to expect going in. I'll leave it to others to debate the success or failure of that move. But as far as adaptations go, not bad, not bad at all. Almost perfect casting (especially Jackie Haley as Rorschach), an almost religious adherence to source material, and well-spent dollars on special effects made for a hearty thumbs up from this viewer.

As for *The Spirit*, what can I say? Apparently, the creative team appears to have let ego win out over content. And we, his fans and audience, lost out because of it. Bob Kane lived to see Batman a success on both the big and little screens. It's too bad that the same can't be said for Will Eisner's creation. Two thumbs down on this one.

The word out of Tinseltown is that hot new funnyman Seth Rogan is tapped to put the sting in *The Green Hornet*. I know we all went through this 20 years ago (Has it *really* been that long?) with Michael Keaton, but I've got a queasy feeling about this, if true. I know many comedic performers over the years have shown themselves capable of strong *dramatic* performances. Robin Williams and Bill Murray come to mind. And we've seen John Cho give new life to Mr. Sulu in *Star Trek*. But Rogen? A little help here, somebody, please! Tell me it's all going to work out for the best.

A while back, one of the Hollywood-heavy entertainment magazines had a several-page listing of more than 70 comics-related projects "in the works." I'd never even heard of many of them. It's predictable that most will never see your local theater, let alone your neighborhood video store. Still, if 25% of them *are* made (before Hollywood moves on to the next money-making genre), I'll be pleasantly surprised. But, given the financial and economic climate across the country right now, escapist entertainment on that scale could be with us for a while yet. And that's not such a bad thing.

Before I close, a little something outta left field. I was in Barnes & Noble recently when I overheard bits and pieces of a conversation (from a roped-off area) between a visiting author and those who had come to hear him and get an autograph. So I was thinking: What if this were a major event, with celebrity authors hawking their wares? And what if two of them just happened to be B.B. Flemm and Hunter Rose? Oh, yeah! Sable vs. Grendel! I'd buy *that* book!

FREE COMIC BOOK DAY 2009 REPORTS FROM THE ROAD

Editor's note: *We asked our CBGXtra forumites to tell us their plans for this year's Free Comic Book Day as well as their experiences. Here are selected excerpts.*

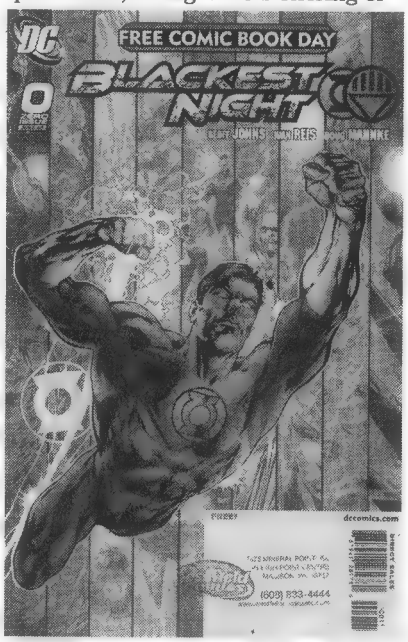
Jim Johnson

I attended, believe it or not, my first FCBD ever at my local shop, Back to the Past, in Livonia, Mich.

I've never gone in the past, because I knew the event wasn't really aimed at existing comic-book fans and I've always questioned whether the event really generates interest in comics or if it just draws people looking for free stuff.

Andy and his crew at BTTP really made it an event, though. Batman made an appearance in front of the store and greeted youngsters and their parents. The store provided a wide array of FCBD-edition comics. And they provided balloons to the little ones, adorned with a sketch of their favorite character!

The notion that Free Comic Book Day's sole intent is to draw new people into comics shops could be questioned, though: DC's offering of



Blackest Night #0, with new content, drew more attention from existing fans than potential new ones.

Maggie: *FCBD does not have a "sole intent."*

The idea is, yes, to reach out to potential readers to show them there continues to be terrific entertainment available from comics shops. But that includes entertainment even current readers may not have noticed. And it's also designed to build the community in and around local comics shops.

J. Wilson

What I Did on My Summer Vac ... errr, I mean ... Free Comic Book Day.

Well, this is the first year in the last six where I didn't work at my local comics shop on FCBD. But I have a good excuse, really! My local comics shop doesn't exist any more.

So I toddled off in the car on my little trip *du jour*.

I first went to Temptations Comics in New Bedford, Mass. It doubles as a guitar shop, and there wasn't all that much going on in the shop when I got there. I think there were three people in the entire store, not counting the two employees (one of whom was simultaneously giving a guitar lesson).

At first, I didn't even see any of the FCBD issues. Turns out they were all in a shortbox on a stool. It didn't seem as if there was much of an effort to drum up interest in the event there.

A huge helping of back issues made the trip interesting enough, although I only bought one bagged and boarded back issue because I didn't have the time to go through the more than 50 long boxes. I would have liked to have seen more effort put into the event.

My Temptations Comics Haul:

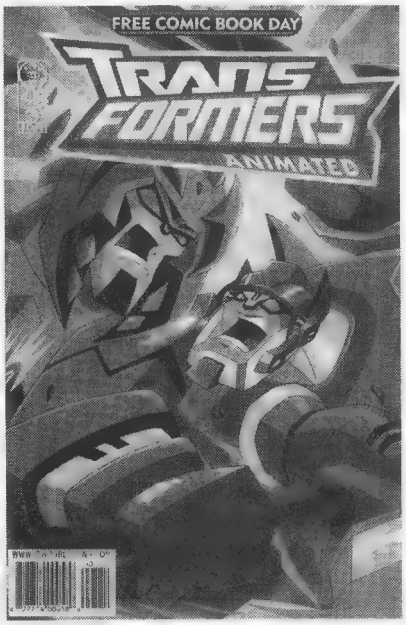
FCBD books (*The World of Cars* and *Mighty Archie Art Players*, both of which will be sent to my niece, and the Oni Press book *Resurrection* for me)

Doctor Strange Sorcerer Supreme #9

Action Comics #871 (for my co-worker)

Total cost: $2

I stopped down the street from Temptations at New England Comics. The store is well laid out and is chock-full of merchandise (comics, trades, shirts, toys, *etc.*). I got there



around 1 p.m., so the availability was either down because of everyone else (and the store was full of people when I walked in) or they just didn't order many of the non-Gold Sponsor books.

The store was running a good

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THINGS YOU *ALMOST* NEVER HEAR AT COMIC CONS...

sale, too (50% off all back issues, 20% off trades, and some other discounts. as well). I would be interested to know what had been available at the beginning of the day, but, despite my short stay at the store, it looked as if people were very happy. Oh, and when I was going into the store — Mickey Mouse was out front waving to the passing traffic.

The staff was very helpful as far as I could see. The guy ringing me up made sure I got the *Transformers/ G.I. Joe* book after taking note of my purchases.

My New England Comics Haul:

FCBD Books (*Bongo Comics Free for All* and *Sonic The Hedgehog*, which will be sent to my niece; *Transformers/G.I. Joe*, which will end up being sent as a bonus with the next comics I sell on eBay.)

IDW's *G.I. Joe* #1-3.

Total Cost $6

My final stop was my *new* local comics shop, Over The Edge Comics in Fairhaven, Mass. This was the store that I went to when my original shop closed.

And, wow, was it a good day to be going to that shop. They had *all* of the FCBD books laid out on one table, while gaming was going on at another table. One of the *Pirates of the Caribbean* movies was on the TV.

The sales featured 75% off certain trades, 40% off other trades, and back issues had four different greatly reduced price points by cost. The store employees were very helpful, explaining everything when I walked in, and we had a nice conversation about *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* (good but not a great film). I ended up being there for about an hour.

I'm hoping they have leftovers of the kid-friendly FCBD books, because I offered to buy them so I can give them out at Halloween. I also took advantage of the back-issue sale.

All in all, this was the most fun of my three stops.

My Over The Edge Comics Haul:

FCBD Books (Bluewater's *William Shatner Presents* book for a co-worker, *Owly and Friends* for my niece, as well as *Love and Capes* and *FCHS* for me.)

Terra mini-series #1-4

IDW's *G.I. Joe* #4

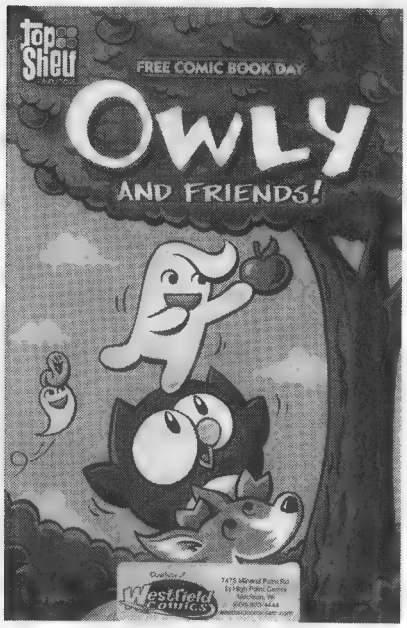
Vigilante #1-5

Daredevil (1st series) #83

Total cost $7

So, for three and a half hours and a grand total of $15 (not including lunch), I got to experience another successful Free Comic Book Day, get new material for both my niece and me, and grab some extra reading at far below cost.

Thanks to FCBD, I've discovered *Amelia Rules!* and a few other titles. I may not be the targeted new comics reader but I think anything that sells more books, whether to a new reader or an established one, can only be a positive.



Chris Galvan

Donna, Jordan, and I once again spent the first Saturday in May visiting comics shops throughout the metro Detroit area to celebrate Free Comic Book Day. This year, we stopped at four stores: two we had visited last year, one new store, and one that I had not visited in several years. Jordan continued his annual tradition of waking up even earlier than the year before (6:15 this time). For his costume choice this year, he combined elements from prior FCBD costumes to create "Captain Bat,"

which was basically his Captain America costume and shield combined with his Batman mask and cape.

The first comics shop on the agenda was our "home" store: Comics & More in Madison Heights, Mich. A line started forming outside the store around 10:30, and the store was packed within minutes of opening the doors at 11. Owner Chris Brown was well prepared for the crowd with a great selection of freebies. Each person received any five FCBD comics of their choice, a full-size *Wolverine* movie poster, a mini *Star Trek* poster, and a promotional *Wolverine* foam claw, which got a huge reaction from

the kids and created a lot of photo opportunities throughout the day.

I also noticed that Comics & More had a greater variety of the FCBD titles than other stores. To help handle the crowds, Chris received much-needed assistance from volunteer David Glover, who'd previously worked at Comics & More for nearly 10 years and helped to keep things running smoothly. Local artist Terrell Culbert from Breathe Again Entertainment spent the day sketching, and Donna received a free autographed copy of Moonstone's *Robin Hood* #5 from writer Paul Storrie. In addition to everything else, Chris held a raffle for a custom-made Deadpool Mighty Mugg that Terrell created using one of the "blank" white molds, and it looked incredible. Chris Brown once again delivered a fun, family-friendly event that everyone enjoyed from start to finish. Without hesitation, I gave this store a five-star rating (out of five, my personal scale).

The second store we visited was Detroit Comics located in downtown Ferndale and owned by the husband and wife team of Brian and Lori Kelly. This was Detroit Comics' second year in business as well as their second FCBD, and Brian had a festive atmosphere going throughout the shop. As mentioned last

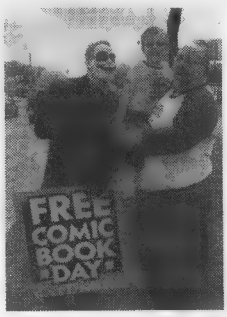
year, Detroit Comics does a great job of reflecting Ferndale's trendy image (just check out their Art-o-mat vending machine!) with an unusual-looking store that still remains very kid-friendly. Balloons were hanging everywhere, and a table offering the FCBD titles was set up right in the middle of the shop with two free comics for each adult and three for each child. We received a warm greeting upon entering, and Jordan enjoyed all the attention he received from his "Captain Bat" costume. Brian apparently liked the costume so much that he gave Jordan a free *Get Fuzzy* book: a favorite comic strip in our household. Detroit Comics also had signings by David Petersen (creator of *Mouse Guard*) and Jeremy Bastian (of *Cursed Pirate Girl*). I also gave this store five stars. Great job, Detroit Comics!

One of our goals for this year was to check out a shop that we had not been to previously, so our next stop was the new Liberty Comics in Roseville. Owner Gale Taylor used super-volunteers Spider-Man and Superman to attract drive-by traffic on busy Gratiot Avenue, and they were definitely pulling in the cars. Although a new store, Liberty Comics is connected to a long history of comics shops dating back about 25 years. Gale was previously a partner at Bob's Comics 'n Warren, which was the shop that replaced Fantasy in Comics when it closed back in the early '90s. Dan and Larry Szpanelewski ran FIC starting around 1984 at the County Flea Market before moving to a permanent building across the street, and I'd had a membership there myself for a few years while I was in college.

Liberty Comics has a spacious shop that offers lots of elbow room and the opportunity to display a huge variety of merchandise. Gale has taken advantage of that space to create a place that has a "retro" comics shop look to it, while remaining a well-organized and stocked store. Liberty did not have a set limit on free comics, but basically kept customers on the honor system by asking them to maintain a limit of two or three FCBD comics. Gale also kept the more child-friendly titles on a separate rack, which made things much easier for parents. While there, I purchased a couple of Marvel's "Dark Reign" comics. There was also the bonus of discovering copies of the impossible-to-find *Viking* #1 from Image Comics, still at cover price! I grew up in Roseville and, after seeing the rise and fall of several comics shops during my younger years, I can say that it would have been great to have had a shop like Liberty Comics in my old hometown during the '80s. I gave this shop four stars.

Our final stop of the day was at Comix Corner in Fraser. Unfortunately, other than the actual giving away of comics, nothing else was going on in this store that would have distinguished the day from any other Saturday. We just did not see the celebratory atmosphere that had been present at the other three shops; we were not greeted at the door — or even acknowledged by anyone — until we checked out. The counter person offered customers a choice of three comics (with a very limited selection), but you had to request them at the counter and wait while the owner pulled out the comics from a box, which seemed to intimidate some of the people in the store. We feel that having the comics on shelves where first-time visitors have free access to check out some of the contents before deciding which books they want is essential to creating new customers. You wouldn't go into a Borders store and have to ask an employee to pull the new Vince Flynn novel from behind the counter before you could see it, so it doesn't seem as if you should have to do this at a comics shop. One star was all I could give this shop.

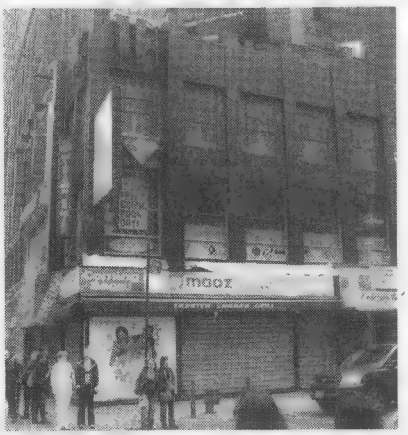
At the end of the day, we'd ended up with about 18 of the FCBD titles (not counting duplicates) along with other freebies. Before we got home around 3 p.m., we made another quick stop at Comics & More to check in with Chris Brown, who was desperately trying to get in a few bites of pizza while the shop was still very busy. Just before we left, we took Jordan's picture with The Joker, who was waving in customers on the sidewalk in front of the shop. Very few people can generate the level of sheer excitement for this industry as does Chris Brown, and we applaud him for it.



Gary Dunaier

A few pictures from Free Comic Book Day in New York:

My first stop, Midtown Comics Times Square, didn't do anything. They put a big sign in the window, but, as you can see, the place was dark when I got there.



Yes, I'm having a little bit of fun with you. When I took that photo, it was still 30 minutes before the store would even open, and *that's* why the lights were off. Since Midtown promised to offer *all* FCBD titles, there was already a long line — maybe halfway down West 40th Street — by the time I got there, and it was a long wait to get in. In order to avoid overcrowding, they were only letting in 10 people at a time, and I didn't get in until about noon, after a 90-minute wait.

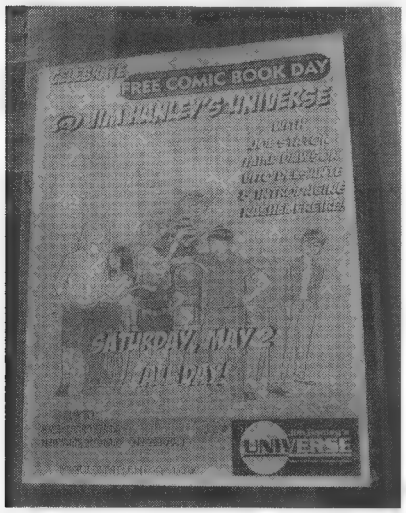
At Midtown Comics, you're not allowed to select which books you want — it's just "take it or leave it."

Again, I'm playing loose with the truth: "Take it or leave it" is *techni-*

cally correct but, in order to make this report more accurate, I have to add that what they do at Midtown is hand out bags containing already-collated sets of *each* available Free Comic Book Day title, so you don't have to worry about missing out — as long as they've still got it, you'll be "taking" (and enjoying) it.

You've got to get up pretty early in the morning to get all the Free Comic Book Day titles available at Midtown. Unfortunately, I didn't. By the time I got my books, some of the titles were already "sold out." My bag "only" contained 16 comics: still a generous supply.

I next went to Jim Hanley's Universe, which had a specially designed poster in the window.



Unlike past years, when comics were behind the counter and you had to ask for them, the comics were laid out on a table and you could look through them before making a decision. Customers were allowed five books each.

From there, it was down to Cosmic Comics on 23rd Street. In addition to the eight copies of your choice, they also offered 30% off everything in the store, and I took advantage of the offer to buy a couple of items. (Incidentally, that's Madison Square Park across the street in the second photo.)

My last stop was Forbidden Planet, near Union Square. Curiously, their Free Comic Book Day setup was *outside* the store — which was strange, because I thought one of the goals behind FCBD was to get people to come inside, and by holding the actual giveaway outside,

there was no incentive for potential customers to go inside. (The store is a small space, and it's possible that having the giveaway inside might have disrupted their ability to do any actual business.)

Ironically, with all the stores I visited, and all the comics I got, I missed out on the one book I was most looking forward to getting: the 25th anniversary reprint of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* #1. Better luck next time, I guess.

SJone1

My son (10), daughter (8), and I (40) visited three Detroit-area shops on our fourth family-event FCBD. Following Chris Galvan's lead, I'll rate our experiences on a scale of one to four stars.

We started the day at Wonderworld Comics in Taylor, Mich. They had a deejay, Supergirl, Poison Ivy, and other costumed characters and a few local artists. We were greeted by Supergirl but no store staff. But they take "Free Comic Book Day" literally there: only one per customer, regardless of age. With such a large number of quality offerings this year, that made choosing the one comic difficult. It's a good thing it isn't the only store in the area. The clientele were almost all teens and adults. My kids were creeped out by the local TV host Wolfman Mac, so we didn't stay long. Three stars for the festive atmosphere, but only one star due to stinginess equals an average of two stars.

Next, we visited Big Ben's Comix in Allen Park, one of the oldest comics shops in Metro Detroit. Ben didn't have anything special going on, but his typically busy store was packed. There were a lot of kids there with mostly dads and a few moms. I'm a regular there, so we were greeted on the way in. Ben offered three FCBD comics to all customers, as well as having "buy one trade paperback, get another 50% off" and other specials. I bought two trade paperbacks and some new comics, and Ben let me take another FCBD comic with my purchases. He gave my kids deals on their purchases and gave each of us a Batman or Superman ink pen. A solid three stars for generosity and being nice to the young'uns.

Last, we visited The Pack Shack, also in Taylor (but the farthest from our home). It had numerous signs announcing FCBD posted along the busy road leading to the shop: a nice touch, especially since the store is easy to miss. That was a success, since there were quite a few kids and tweens there with their parents. We were greeted by store staff on the way in and given the details of their offer: one FCBD comic per customer, with one additional for each $10 spent, one free HeroClix (very cool, since WizKids isn't around this year to offer one), and a chance at a drawing for a DC mini-statue. By that time, we'd accumulated most of the FCBD comics we wanted, so the one-per-customer limit wasn't a big deal. At least, they gave you a chance to "earn" more free comics with your purchases. But, when my daughter couldn't decide which HeroClix mini she wanted, a worker gave her *three* of them.

He also gave my son a HeroClix Feat card of his choice and me an unpunched HeroClix Lois Lane character token in addition to our free Clix. When I admired the set of limited-edition JLA Starro Slave HeroClix they had for sale, the same worker offered me a deal on them. Since I'd already spent my limit for the day, I had to decline. I mentioned that I'd been laid off and had to budget my hobby purchases. Then, the worker — the very kind Jim Jackson — handed me a Green Lantern Starro Slave Clix and said, "This is for you." That blew me away!

A solid four stars for The Pack Shack for getting customers in the door *and* for their generosity to my kids and me. We'll definitely be going back!

After a stop at home to pick up my wife, we finished the day by going to the movies to see *Wolverine*. What a great tradition to have Free Comic Book Day on the opening weekend of a big screen super-hero film! We all enjoyed the movie, and, all in all, FCBD 2009 was a great time for my family and me. We look forward to FCBD 2010 (and *Iron Man 2*)!

Superherocrazy

I was all excited to attend Free Comic Book Day for the first time and take my 6-year-old daughter to add to the experience. There are no comics shops in my town, so I checked the website and found two shops that were more than 40 minutes away. We arrived at the first location and were dismayed to find it was no longer a comics shop, but had been converted to a coin shop with no comics for sale.

Even though I was disappointed, the next shop was only a few minutes away, so away we went. I couldn't find the shop and, after driving up and down the street a few times, I finally parked and talked with a nice gentleman who owned a hobby shop. He explained there were *plans* for a comic shop but it had never opened.

We were both upset, and the day was a total bust. Next year, if I decide to participate, I'll be sure to call the shops before heading out.

Lee Houston Jr.

I visited three stores in northeastern Connecticut on Free Comic Book Day 2009.

The first, Wonderland Comics in Putnam, is my regular haunt, where I go to get my books, talk comics, and generally hang out.

The store owner and employees were very nice, with a lot of sales going on. Back issues were half price, and every new comic book on the stands that you were not already a subscriber to was only $1 each, regardless of actual cover price. Needless to say, I did most of my shopping there.

The only drawbacks were the actual FCBD books themselves. Although I had arrived before the end of the first hour, some "enterprising" person had already helped himself to most copies of one specific title (I never learned which), so everyone else was limited to two FCBD titles, period. But at least I did get *Green Lantern: Blackest Night* #0 and *Wolverine*.

The next stop was a used book-

HULK, CAPTAIN AMERICA © MARVEL. GLACIERS ARE STILL IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN.

store that also happens to sell comics. By the time I arrived, it obviously did not have as much as it had started with, but I was able to get the *Avengers*, along with the *Bongo Comics* and the *Shonen Jump* specials, because it was limiting selections, too.

The last store I visited is in a local mall. It sells comics as a sideline among all the other stuff it carries. The store has some deal going with a comic-book store elsewhere in Connecticut (that I have never been to) to supply its comics. I say this is the weirdest of the three, because, not only was it limiting everyone to just one FCBD book, period, I did not have the heart to tell the staff that, for whatever reason, everything they were offering was actually from *previous* Free Comic Book Days!

But at least I was able to acquire the Archie FCBD issue from 2003.

I am being polite in not listing the names of the last two stores.

But, alas, none of the three stores I went to on FCBD had any guests.

Brent Frankenhoff

Due to family obligations, we found ourselves in Eau Claire, Wis., rather than our usual run to Green Bay and Appleton for this year's Free Comic Book Day. I knew that there were two stores in Eau Claire, and a quick Internet search and a phone call confirmed that information, at least via each store's answering machine. The reality, however, was quite different.

Our run started much later than usual this year, at 1:40 p.m., when we arrived at Main Street Comics and Collectibles (aka Eau Claire Comics and Collectibles). While there was activity in the store, it was the owner and his family loading the last few items and taking down the store's sign, since it had gone out of business May 1.

Undaunted, we went on to Clairemont Comics, located in a small strip mall near a major intersection and across an alley from a busy Old Country Buffet. When we arrived shortly after 2 p.m., a sign on the door said, "Out to lunch," so we visited a used-videogame store in the same strip mall and then returned to the car to wait. By 2:35, there was still no sign of activity, and a quick peek in the door didn't show any Free Comic Book Day display, so we proceeded to the movies and saw *Monsters vs. Aliens*.

A call to the store May 5 yielded more information. Owner Jeff Brown, who will celebrate 10 years in business this June, said he hasn't participated in Free Comic Book Day for several years, basing his decision on lackluster response for the amount of money he had to invest in the event. However, he said he's considering holding an event next year, especially in light of the other Eau Claire shop's closure. He said that he's already picked up a number of customers from that store and expects the trend to continue. He'd been closed mid-afternoon Saturday because he was watching his daughters (aged 2 years and eight months, respectively) and it was their lunchtime. (In addition to his shop, he also works overnights at a Wal-Mart distribution center each weekend.)

He added that, while he's lost some customers due to the economy, he felt he's doing a pretty good business for the population base in his area. He makes it a point to do special orders and that helps draw additional customers to his store.

Despite the lack of Free Comic Book Day activity in Eau Claire, there was plenty elsewhere in the state. A phone survey of stores closer to ***CBG***'s home base of Iola provided the following anecdotes:

Chris Randazzo, owner and manager of Galaxy Comics, Games and More in Stevens Point said that his Free Comic Book Day was "great. We make an event of it." A new *Magic: The Gathering* release and related tournament gave Free Comic Book Day an exciting atmosphere, although it did crowd Randazzo's store.

Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic writer John Jackson Miller was on hand again this year to sign copies of his series and stayed more than an hour past his posted time. "People loved talking to him," Randazzo said. "He's like a rock star."

Randazzo is also promoting Free Comic Book Day through other outlets by giving away more than 400 comics at local elementary schools and donating graphic-novel libraries to the two junior high schools in Stevens Point, a program he hopes to expand to neighboring communities.

In Green Bay, David Powers of Powers Comics & Collectibles said that the store had between 800 and 1,000 attendees throughout the day, and sales were up 30% over the previous year. Special events at the store included storewide sales and free refreshments including Papa John's pizzas. "We promoted the event with radio spots, and the local CW station produced a segment on us that aired on *The Daily Buzz*," Powers said. "People loved the event, especially families. Those who hadn't been to it before were surprised that the comics were free with no strings attached.

"Free Comic Book Day is a great promotional idea: the best one that the comics industry could come up with. It's a great way to get new readers into a comics shop for the first time and to get kids reading. All comics stores should make a big deal out of it. I don't know why some don't."

He added that he and his brother are already making plans for next year.

In Appleton, Power House Comics Manager Mick Gayan also said that he'd had an increased turnout with a line waiting outside before the store opened its doors that morning. "Everyone seemed to have a good time, and we saw lots of families," he said. "I was pleased that there were more titles this year aimed at younger readers. We heard from many parents and kids who hadn't been here before that they plan to return between now and the next Free Comic Book Day."

The store offered 60% off all back issues and had a special $1 box section. (Unlike previous years, when a promotion had been arranged with a local theater, this year Gayan said that the theater had wanted the store to work with it on *Star Trek*, rather than *X-Men Origins: Wolverine*.) Gayan said that he felt Free Comic Book Day is a good promotional event. "It doesn't cost too much for the retailer," he added, "but it goes a long way toward promoting comics reading and collecting."

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My next one will be better

"Worst film you ever saw?"

by **PETER DAVID**

Every writer has to have that innate optimism.

Tim Burton has made films of varying quality. Some were heart-tugging gems (*Edward Scissorhands*, the film that actually had my tough-as-nails daughter, Shana, sobbing copiously at the end, "That's so saaaaaad," even as I was sitting there scratching my head and wondering where in the world he'd gotten the giant ice blocks from). Others were seriously flawed but nevertheless confounded expectations and thus were hugely popular (*Batman*, the film that nearly got me booed off a stage at a convention because I said I was willing to wait to see it up on screen instead of just pronounce it a campy piece of Bat-crud in advance). Others were well made but were personally so upsetting to me that I'll never see them again (*Big Fish*). And then there were some about which the less said, the better (*Planet of the Apes*).

But there is one that I have always cherished above all others, and that is the story of Ed Wood, titled — unsurprisingly — *Ed Wood*. Wood, as you doubtless know (which is what we always says right before we go ahead and provide the fact anyway, because, if Sherlock Holmes doesn't know that the Earth orbits the sun, as was revealed in his first outing, then it's impossible to assume safely that there's anything that *everyone* knows), was the director of horror films so monumentally bad that he is generally considered to be the worst director of all time. His best-known was *Plan Nine from Outer Space*, which has the twin tragedy of, not only being generally declared as, hands down, the lousiest film ever made, but features the last screen appearance of the great Bela Lugosi. Lugosi appears for about a minute of screen time but died before any more footage could be completed and was impersonated on film by a chiropractor holding a cape over his face — an imposture so inept that Lou Costello was more convincing pretending to be Dracula in order to fool the monster in *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*.

In the film, Wood is depicted as sort of the anti-Orson Welles. He is a man with a vision and is determined to see that vision fulfilled no matter what obstacles Hollywood may throw his way. The difference, of course, is that Welles' vision is that of a genius while Wood's is ... well ... not. But in Burton's film, it's not the quality of the vision that matters; it's that you have one at all and are willing to fight for it.

The scene that spoke most directly to me was a scene in which — having dropped off his latest *magnum opus* with a movie studio — Johnny Depp (Tim Burton's movie doppelgänger) as Ed Wood calls the executive to learn the exec's assessment of the film. We hear the phone call entirely from Wood's end, as the following ensues: "Really? Worst film you ever saw. Well, my next one will be better! [Pause] Hello? [Pause] Hello?"

Every writer has to have that innate optimism. No matter who you are, no matter how great you are (or, for that matter, how lousy), you're going to write stuff to which people are going to react badly. You have to develop a thick skin if you're going to cope with that. Not everyone can, no matter how successful they are. Stephenie Meyer, by all reports, was so accustomed to receiving constant fan acclaim for her *Twilight* novels that, when part of her next *magnum opus* leaked onto the Internet and was savaged, that — probably combined with the fan drubbing that her final *Twilight* book received — prompted her to announce in unmistakably hurt tones that she was never going to finish it. (It's one of the few times that the Internet's nearly pathological disregard for copyright might have provided a service to humanity.) You have to be able to shake it off or you simply can't survive as a writer.

Which is why it always breaks me up if fans claim that various writers such as, oh, I dunno — me — can't handle criticism. You can't be a professional writer for 30 years if you can't handle criticism. When you have to cope with a five-page memo from an editor or a TV executive detailing everything that's wrong with your latest offering that has to be changed, fixed, or altered before it can be put before an audience, being able to cope with the soul-deadening

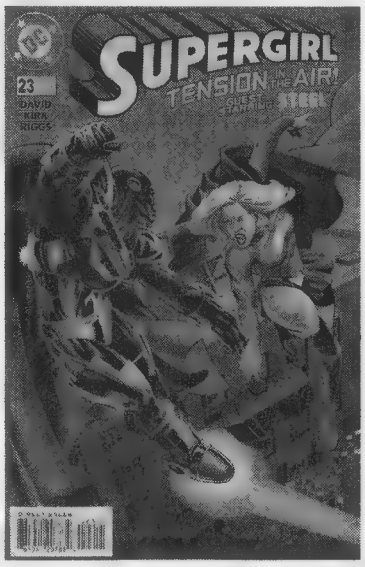
assessment of some anonymous guy online declaring, "Wow, the last issue really sucked!" isn't all that much of a chore. If you're going to survive as a writer, you have to be able to, as Ed Wood did, shrug and declare, "Well, my next one will be better!"

That said, I freely admit that they can't all be gems.

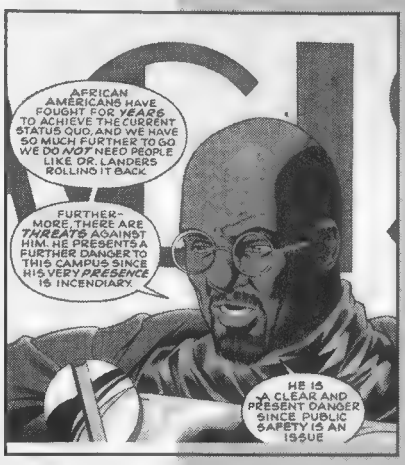
Everyone has good days and bad days at their chosen profession. If you have an off day, then you go home, pour yourself a stiff drink, and leave it behind you. When you're a writer, your bad day at the office can wind up seeing print months later. Sometimes, the work is fatally flawed at the concept and no amount of rewriting and no amount of editorial intervention is going to improve it. But there are deadlines to be met, books that have to be published, and, ready or not, here they come.

And then there's the work that you put out that simply seemed like a good idea at the time. Or that you firmly believed in or had good reasons for writing the way that you did. And not only did it *not* connect with the audience, but you managed to tick off a considerable number of people.

And, of course, the unexamined life is not worth living, so in the interest of full disclosure and navel gazing, I'm going to list, in no particular order, my various endeavors that either did not represent my best day at the office or else didn't garner the reaction from the fans that I'd expected.



***Supergirl* #23 (Jul 98):** Supergirl comes to the campus of Stanhope University and finds herself caught in a protest situation. An anthropologist with fairly radical theories is going to deliver a speech at the university in which he is putting forward the notion that blacks are biologically inferior to whites. This garners objection from student organizations across the board, and they mount protests that are designed to stop him from delivering his remarks. Meantime, there are some, albeit not many, who advocate the idea that, in this country, free speech is a right that everyone should fight for, even if it involves speech with which they disagree. (Actually, *especially* when it's speech with which they disagree, since popular speech needs no one to defend it.) Supergirl comes down on the side of those advocating the notion that the speaker should be allowed to deliver his remarks, and, if you don't like what he has to say, then don't come and hear him.



Representing the opposing side, stating that sentiments regarded as "hate speech" should never be allowed, is John Henry Irons, aka Steel. It seemed to make sense. Naturally, he would have a strong opinion on the matter, considering he's a black man. (Although the popular term nowadays seems to be POC, Person of Color. Of course, one could point out that white is also a color. For that matter, white as defined in the visible spectrum is the combination of all colors, while black is the absence of color, so I'm not sure what's up with that.)

Now, understand that I wasn't fabricating this plot out of whole cloth. Where does a writer get his ideas? In this case, I was drawing it from actual events that had happened at various universities and colleges throughout the country. And black professors and scholars had not been mute on the subject: They had written with great force and clarity and wisdom, putting forward all the reasons that speakers advocating views on race that could be considered, at the very least, insulting, should not be provided venues at colleges. Agree or disagree with their conclusions, but you couldn't argue the quality of the thinking behind them.

So I put their words in Steel's mouth. Drawing on comments from a half dozen different black professors, every single word that Steel spoke, every sentiment he expressed, was the best thinking that POC (Professors of Color) had put forward on the subject.

And I was pilloried for it.

I had chosen Steel for the role because it made perfect story sense and because I felt that having a character with the "S" on his chest putting forward his sentiments would add weight and gravitas to them. Instead, fans declared that I wrote it specifically to make Steel look bad because — I don't know. He cheated me at cards or something. Held up as proof positive of this belief were the sentiments I had Steel expressing that were, readers declared,

deviously constructed by me in order to make Steel (and blacks) look bad. It didn't matter that what Steel was saying was, word for word, reasoning put forward by learned black men. It was declared insulting to blacks and "proof" that I had some sort of ax to grind. So basically I put forward my best efforts to provide both sides of an incendiary issue and got slapped around for it. Of course, I could have flopped the roles: had Supergirl fight to suppress the speaker's sentiments while Steel argues on behalf of allowing him to speak. I could have written that easily. At which point I would have been attacked for portraying Steel as an Uncle Tom who was out of touch with the concerns of black Americans. Which just goes to show that *anything* having to do with race is the third rail of fiction, no matter how carefully you think it out and no matter how much you buttress it with facts.

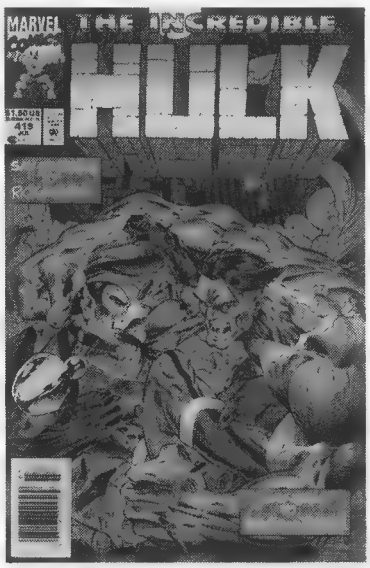
***Tangent Comics/Wonder Woman* (Sep 98):** The Tangent line, as you know (ahem) was DC's endeavor to have fun with its characters by presenting writers with the character names and inviting those writers to create new versions. I was given Wonder Woman. Since the original Wonder Woman was a stranger to our shores, the new WW would likewise — with deference to Moses' son — be a stranger in a strange land, *i.e.*, an alien. I further decided to key off the "Wonder" aspect of her name and have her deeply philosophical. So much so that, when confronted with two hostile aliens who are determined to kill her, she spends 20 pages pondering whether she, in fact, has an intrinsic right to exist. To be or not to be: That is her question. When she finally resolves that she *does* have the right to exist, she annihilates her opponents within two panels.

I loved it.

Fans hated it. "Twenty pages of fighting" was the near-universal declaration. They decried it as pointless, as ridiculous, as being utterly without merit. A waste of their time and money.

In the online discussions, I think I saw exactly one guy who said, "Did any of you actually *read* what she was *saying?* The philosophical monologue? It was really fascinating. All this deeply thoughtful stuff on the rights of humanity as seen from the POV of a non-human." He was promptly shouted down as not knowing what he was talking about.

Fans are veerrry particular about how they want their fights to be handled. Case in point:

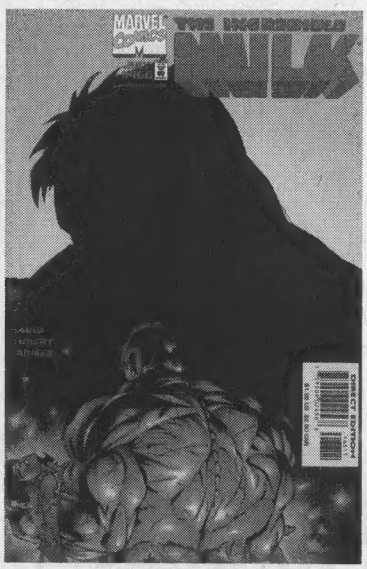


***Incredible Hulk* #419 (Jul 94):** The merged Hulk (*not* the Professor, thank you very much) encounters a shamed Skrull derisively referred to as Talos the Tamed. Talos battles The Hulk while his fellow Skrulls look on, determined to lose his life in combat with The Hulk so that his name will regain its honor. Upon realizing that that's what Talos is up to, The Hulk not only throws the fight but

begs Talos for mercy. This gives Talos serious cred in the eyes of his fellow Skrulls, and he departs, his honor restored in the eyes of the Skrulls because he brought the formidable Hulk to his knees.

Which was fine for Talos, but it killed me in the eyes of the fans. I could have had The Hulk club an entire pod of baby seals to death (or, for that matter, pod an entire club of baby seals to death) and it would not have generated a fraction of the protest that this story brought in from the fans.

She-Hulk fans may not be able to agree on what they want their heroine to be (funny, furious, savage, fourth-wall-breaking, promiscuous, chaste) but Hulk fans are pretty much on the same page: They want the Hulk to be the strongest one there is. Period. The Hulk didn't give a damn what the Skrulls thought of him, but the fans sure did, and they let me know that they felt I had betrayed, not only The Hulk, but *them.* It was the single most unpopular issue I had ever written, and even I, obstreperous as I can be sometimes, got the message and never again had The Hulk throw a fight. And speaking of The Hulk ...

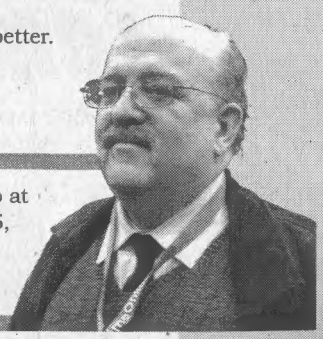


The Death of Betty Banner (*Incredible Hulk* #466, Jul 98): My intention was to explore how Bruce Banner and The Hulk were going to cope with the death of his anchor to the real world. The series was going to become heavily Bannercentric, and he would be dark and fearsome and disconnected from humanity. Had I known that the Marvel top editorial echelon was going to declare that, no, the series would now become a mindless rampaging unspeaking Hulk smashing everything in sight — and forcing me off the book two issues later — I never would have killed Betty in the first place. Curiously, several years later, Bruce Jones hit many of the same elements in his run that I had been going to explore and it was wildly successful. Go figure.

***Web of Spider-Man* #12 (Mar 86):** This one wasn't entirely my fault. Editor Jim Owsley handed me the script for #11 by another writer and asked me to write the conclusion. I saw all kinds of problems with the script, but it was already drawn and in the process of being lettered, so there was nothing I could do. So I did the best I could with concluding the story, but, long story short, it ended with Spider-Man willingly allowing some criminals to go free. Of all people — of *all* people — to let some bad guys go so that they could, y'know, maybe kill somebody's uncle down the line.

What the hell was I thinking?

Oh, well. The next one will be better.



PETER DAVID, can be written to at P.O. Box 239, Bayport, NY 11705, or visited at *www.peterdavid.net.*

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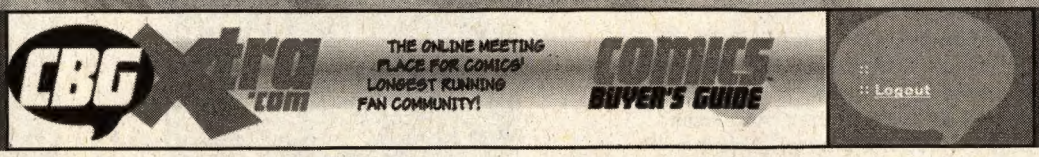

FREE COMIC BOOK DAY

You saw our reports from this year's Free Comic Book Day throughout the issue, but it's not too late to share your experiences. Did you find a cool new series? Meet a creator? Expose a friend or relative to the fun of comics? Let us know!

The voting for the winners of this year's CBG Fan Awards continued throughout May and we'll announce the winners next issue. And it's not too early to start choosing your favorites for next year's nomination process.

Of course, our forums continue various lively discussions, including a thread on local comics conventions. Do you have a comics-related question that you've always wanted to ask? Tell us at *www.cbgxtra.com*!

About our cover artist:

Brazilian artist Rod Pereira said he studied Art & Communication at Carlos de Campos' School, but much of his training is "autodidactic." He received additional training by working as an assistant for such artists as Roger Cruz, Luke Ross, and Manny Clark.

In addition to his comics work, Pereira has also worked in advertising and videogame design.

After several years of working up comics samples, Pereira's first U.S. work was on Lightning's *Hellina* in the mid-1990s.

You can see more of Rod's work at *www.glasshousegraphics.com*.

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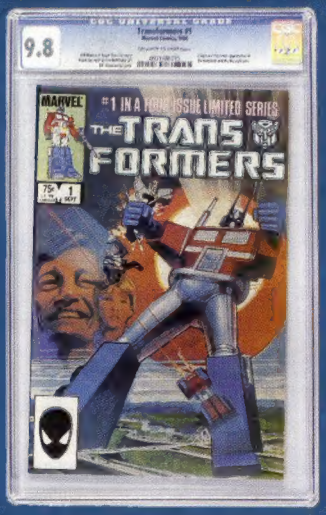

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